

A Beginner's Guide to Sentinels of the Multiverse: Definitive Edition

Introduction

Hello! I'm Churro, and if you couldn't tell already, I'm a big fan of Sentinels of the Multiverse. I'm creating this guide along with other members of The Letters Page Discord server as a starter guide for newer players who may be struggling with the game. This document is not intended to be a comprehensive guide, or introduce you to a character for the first time, but instead, as a stepping-off point to help understand some of the nuances of each character and deepen your understanding. Certain characters may have interactions that are not immediately obvious, and the goal of this guide is to point out things you might have missed to help increase your enjoyment of a deck.

This guide is structured by box, with the core game decks coming first, and will be updated as new expansions are released. For each deck, you will find general strategy points, interesting interactions, and common pitfalls that may be giving you trouble.

Each hero section details how to play using the base character card, which I generally find to be the most straightforward way to learn a deck. Variants are listed below the base character guide, and detail how the variant changes the dynamic of the deck. Additionally, expansions may add content to the core game, so if you find a variant name you are unfamiliar with, it may be from an expansion, and all variants will be marked as such using the following symbols.

∇ : **Sentinels of the Multiverse: Definitive Edition Core Game**

☞ : **Rook City Renegades Expansion**

Disclaimer: I am by no means an expert, and the content presented in this guide reflects my own experiences, along with those of other collaborators. If you find that after multiple games, you still just can't get the hang of the deck, it may just be that you have a different playstyle, and it may help you to do the exact opposite of what you read here. The main thing I've learned is that everyone approaches the same cards in a slightly different way, and you may find your own novel approach to the deck.

With that being said, let's dive in!

General Tips

- **Changes in Pace:** Definitive Edition plays very quickly when compared to the original Sentinels of the Multiverse. This is noteworthy because many heroes have one distinct finishing card that rewards a long setup. For Tachyon, it's Lightspeed Barrage. For Wraith, it's Inventory Barrage. I've found that many players struggle because they hold on to these moves too long. By the time you've built up 35 cards in your trash, Lightspeed Barrage often ends up being overkill, or worse, your allies defeat the villain before you get to use it. People tend to have much greater success with cards like

Lightspeed Barrage when they use them mid-game, dealing ~15 damage to deal with a nasty spaceship or minion, and often have time to charge up for a second one, dealing another 15+ damage in the final round. This may not always be the case, but especially against villains like Voss, a well-timed medium sized hit to a troublesome minion often gives more breathing room than a massive attack at the end of the game.

- HP as a Resource: An important detail of Sentinels: your character does not get weaker as they lose HP. I've played with many players over the years who are terrified of losing HP, and often forgo strong cards in the name of keeping their health high. In my experience, people tend to have more success when they think of HP like a bank account. You never want to let that number hit zero, but spending some HP to get further ahead can often improve your situation greatly, especially if you have ways to earn some of it back. Pushing the Limits, for example, deals 2 fire damage to the user, but in return, you receive an extra card play, and extra draws to support yourself. This means that in conjunction with the right One-Shots, Tachyon with Pushing the Limits can often hit 5+ card plays a turn, which is a great return on your HP investment. This applies even more to characters like Fanatic who center themselves around getting to low HP. Of course, don't be reckless, but if you feel like you're never quite up to speed with other players, you may want to consider using those cards or putting out a Reaction and taking a hit from the villain to accelerate yourself.

Introduction

General Tips

Core Game

Heroes

Legacy

First Appearance Variant

The Wraith

First Appearance Variant

Detective Wraith

Bunker

First Appearance Variant

Stealth Suit Bunker

Tachyon

First Appearance Variant

Absolute Zero

First Appearance Variant

Unity

First Appearance Variant

Scavenger Unity

The Argent Adept

First Appearance Variant

Fanatic

First Appearance Variant

Haunted Fanatic

Captain Cosmic

First Appearance Variant

Tempest

First Appearance Variant

Haka

First Appearance Variant

Werewolf Haka

Ra

First Appearance Variant

Backdraft Ra

Villains

Baron Blade

Critical Event

Citizen Dawn

Critical Event

Grand Warlord Voss

Critical Event

Omnitron

Critical Event

The Matriarch

Critical Event

Akash'Bhuta

Critical Event

Environments

Megalopolis

Freedom Tower

Insula Primalis

Magmaria

The Ruins of Atlantis

Wagner Mars Base

Rook City Renegades

Expatriette

First Appearance Variant

Dark Watch Expatriette

Eclipse

Setback

First Appearance

Dark Watch Setback

Fey-Cursed Setback

Nightmist

First Appearance Variant

Dark Watch Nightmist

Mentor Nightmist

Mr. Fixer

First Appearance

Dark Watch Mr. Fixer

Black Fist

The Harpy

First Appearance

Dark Watch

Blood Raven

Alpha

First Appearance

Reporter Alpha

Alpha 2000

Villains

The Organization

Critical Event

Plague Rat

Critical Event

Spite

Critical Event

Gloomweaver

Critical Event

Kismet

Critical Event

Ambuscade

Critical Event

Apex

Critical Event

The Fey-Court

Critical Event

Terrorform

Critical Event

Environments

Rook City

Pike Industrial Complex

Diamond Manor

The Temple of Zhu Long

Core Game

Heroes

Legacy

General Strategy: Legacy. The man himself. As a representation of the all-American hero archetype, Legacy serves as the team leader and motivator for all those by his side. He's capable of using cards like Thokk! and Flying Smash to take matters into his own hands, but he's much more comfortable as the wind in his team's sails, handing out damage increases and protecting his teammates from harm. He's also not terribly complicated, but the little complexity he has comes mostly from the fact that he's generally only able to play one card a turn, meaning that each decision has to be intentional.

Luckily, each of Legacy's cards is extremely effective, and once Legacy gets going, you have an indomitable wall, taking massive hits from the enemy using Bulletproof Skin or Dauntless Durability. Meanwhile, your allies are at max capacity, reaping the benefits of Inspiring Presence and your base power Galvanize. If things get really out of hand, cards like Heroic Interception or Take Down (especially in conjunction with your defensive cards) give your allies some breathing room to get back on their feet.

Legacy's major drawback is that he can't react quickly to situations or support himself. Most of his card effects exclude him, and many times, he can't afford to use the powers on Motivational Charge, Keen Vision, or Danger Sense to do the things he wants to do because his allies appreciate Galvanize so much. This is where The Legacy Ring may be useful, to give Legacy some versatility, by allowing him to use an extra power. All in all, Legacy has enough force to be a powerful last man standing, but if you play your cards right, Legacy serves as a potent protector and motivational force for the other heroes, who will always appreciate having him around.

▽ First Appearance Variant

Much like base Legacy, FA Legacy's innate power affects allies rather than himself, meaning that he plays at roughly the same pace with both variants. However, this doesn't mean your gameplay won't change. Galvanize is one of the most effective powers in the game, and seeing as you're not handing out that blanket buff to your allies, you may find that enemy targets stick

around a little longer. This slows down the pace of the game a little, and if you plan on playing as a tank, you may have to deal with more incoming attacks than usual. However, once your allies get the field under control, they may not need as much protection, which frees FA Legacy up to do other things. With base Legacy, you often find yourself constrained by the fact that Galvanize is almost always the most effective thing you can do, whereas Protector shines as an early game stall, letting your allies get up and running. Afterwards, you're free to fall into a more active support role, using your other powers at your leisure.

The Wraith

General Strategy: Options, options, options. That's the name of the game with Wraith. Wraith brings to the fight her trusty Utility Belt, filled with tools for almost any situation. As a "jack-of-all-trades" character, Wraith is able to adapt her playstyle on the fly to fit whatever role her team needs at the moment, provided she has the right cards. Her deck contains a multitude of Items, most of which supply her with new powers with a variety of useful effects. Even when the luck of the draw isn't in your favor and you can't find the card you're looking for, she'll still almost always have at least *something* to do.

With all that preamble about how much she can do, let's take a look at exactly what her options are. Most straightforward are her damage dealing powers. Razor Ordnance and Throwing Knives can provide some respectable damage for a non-dedicated attacking hero, especially when provided with boosts from her Micro-Targeting Computer and allies like Legacy and Fanatic. However, it's often better to lean into her more utilitarian powers to help the team as a whole. If your team is taking too much damage, her Stun Bolt and Smoke Bombs can help soften the blow. Sonic Neutralizer and Infrared Eyepiece are fantastic tools to help control the Environment or the Villain, respectively. And don't discount her base power, Stealth, either. By slipping into the shadows, Wraith can reduce the damage she takes - a consistently useful ability in the early game when she might not have the powers she wants yet, and able to help her survive a tough barrage or even act as a semi-decent tank should she end up as the hero with the highest HP. With all these options, one of her biggest restrictions is the fact that she can only choose a single power each turn. Luckily, her Utility Belt is here to help. While it does provide another solid fallback power, its most important role is granting Wraith an extra power usage, dramatically increasing her possibilities.

Of course, all these powers are useless if she can't get them out of her deck, but that's hardly an issue if she has Impromptu Invention or Leverage in her hand. Impromptu Invention gets a random Item onto the field without sacrificing momentum, while Leverage provides an absurd 5 cards in hand. With the ability to draw several cards quickly, compounded by Impromptu Invention, Infrared Eyepiece, and Utility Belt also giving extra cards, she's able to build up an arsenal in her hand quite quickly. It may seem pointless to build up a large hand like this when she can still only play a single card per turn, but that's where the final important piece of her set comes into play: Inventory Barrage. By discarding Items from hand, Wraith can deal some pretty major damage - a great mid-to-late game play when you have an opening or need to get rid of an annoying tanky target.

▽ First Appearance Variant

FA Wraith's Haunt the Shadows is a power whose utility changes depending on the villain she's facing. Feeling somewhat like a combination of Infrared Eyepiece and Impromptu Invention, it sacrifices the tankiness that Stealth provides in exchange for both accelerated setup and, more importantly, an easy way to provide reconnaissance for her team in the early game. If you're willing to take some heavier hits, this is a great early game boost for not only yourself, but your whole team.

🔍 Detective Wraith

Detective Wraith, being able to look at the top card of a deck and play, bury, or replace it, provides a strong degree of versatility in that she can affect any deck and gives you multiple options to deal with that card. She trades a couple HP for the ability to control and scout the villain deck and the ability to hand out free card plays to any deck on the field. Thus, the way to use Detective Wraith heavily depends on the scenario. If your allies are struggling, help them set up. If the villain is overwhelming, try to intercept their problem cards. This power is much more likely to be used late game than the other two, as its versatility isn't diminished by your other powers, so get searching! You have a lot of detective work to do.

Bunker

General Strategy: Bunker is designed to evoke the feeling of driving a massive, complex, weaponized tank. To operate this tank effectively, you'll have to keep your head on a swivel, checking ammo levels, installing new Ordnances, and scanning your surroundings for threats. You're able to play a guns-blazing, devil-may-care, shoot-anything-that-moves style, but as a military tactician, making tough choices and having a precise touch is the key to really making Bunker shine. With a little skill, Bunker is able to lay down a massive amount of cover fire, taking out threats to the team and quickly disposing of problems in ways other heroes simply can't, and if a target becomes too oppressive, a well-loaded Omni-Cannon can wipe away that problem in an instant. So the question is, how do you reach this point?

The first key point to realize with Bunker is that you need to prioritize. Your Ordnance cards are your main weapons, which are fueled by cards from the top of your deck. The challenge of Bunker's deck is that Ordnances load automatically, but very slowly, at 1 card per turn. This means that you need to use your other cards to accelerate that rate, but you don't have enough acceleration cards to give equal attention to every gun, and will have to decide which ones to give your attention to. Additionally, not every Ordnance is useful against every Villain, which adds another layer of choice. For example, Mounted AP Gun deals irreducible, single-target damage, which is excellent for punching through Voss's minions, but may not be able to fire rapidly enough to deal with the Matriarch's endless flood of Fowl the same way that Gatling Gun would be able to. Your guns also require reload time, and firing too recklessly can leave you low on ammo in crucial moments. This is where Bunker's non-Ordnance cards come in, keeping the machine well-oiled and ready to go. LIDAR Intel is an excellent maintenance card against target-heavy villains, allowing you to draw the cards you need before they get trapped under your Ordnances where you can't reach them. Expendable Power Bank also provides a steady

income of ammo, as well as giving you a one-time boost if you need a gun loaded immediately. If you get in a sticky situation, Adhesive Foam Grenade or Tactical Command can often create breathing room while you reload, or Emergency Shielding can give you a little cover.

Finally we reach Bunker's central framework, his Mode cards. Modes are single-round Ongoing that give Bunker the speed he needs to get online, or to recover after a big turn. Recharge Mode and Upgrade Mode are the two early-game Modes, both restricting Bunker from firing weapons for a turn in exchange for allowing him to install and load his Ordinances much more quickly than usual. Recharge Mode allows you to place any number of cards from your hands under your Ordinances, which can be extremely powerful in conjunction with LIDAR Intel. Once you have all of your weapons loaded, Turret Mode allows you to fire a whopping three guns in a single turn, and boosts the damage dealt by each. In summary, Bunker's deck very much rewards observant, tactical play, and the key to making him shine is thinking ahead.

▽ First Appearance Variant

FA Bunker trades out Bunker's ability to load his guns quickly and a little bit of health in exchange for some more consistency. His base power lets him choose one of two options: 1) he can deal a target some melee damage, letting him come out swinging as he waits for his guns, or 2) salvage an Item, which helps him recover from his stuff being blown up, or lets him get Items that were put under Ordinance cards into his hand afterwards.

⚡ Stealth Suit Bunker

Stealth Suit Bunker is Bunker's fastest variant, trading off 5 HP for a massive amount of acceleration and versatility. With both a collect and a play, you can pull any Mode card from your deck and put it into play immediately, or just collect it and then play something else. This means that Stealth Suit Bunker can set up and stay running much faster and more reliably than the other variants, and start contributing earlier. This does come at the cost of 5 HP, which is notable, because Bunker is not particularly tanky to begin with, so you'll need to keep an eye out for Emergency Shielding to keep yourself in good shape, but when you can pull Recharge Mode and LIDAR Intel at will, this shouldn't be too hard.

Tachyon

General Strategy: With Tachyon, speed is the game. You're good at drawing cards - both through your base power and through your deck, and more importantly, you're the best at playing loads of cards - alongside multiple One-Shots (Fleet of Foot and Expedited Efficiency) letting you chain together plays. Tachyon has two key limited cards that define her engine. Her HUD Goggles give her an extra play per turn, alongside making her damage irreducible (helpful because she has very few high-damage cards). Additionally, her key Ongoing, Pushing the Limits, allows to get an extra play *and* an extra draw, at the cost of dealing herself damage every turn while it's out. More often than not, the benefits of Pushing the Limits outweigh the drawbacks. If you get into trouble, Hypersonic Dash (especially in conjunction with HUD Goggles) gives you a round of breathing room to get back on your feet.

As far as Tachyon's base power goes, you have a choice to make, draw or discard? Drawing can potentially be used to keep your engine going, but you have lots of other ways to draw, and the discards fuel your powerful One-Shots, so it's important to think about this decision carefully. The typical tactic is that since you have multiple copies of most of your cards, if the card isn't immediately useful, discard it, and you'll likely either draw a replacement or have your trash reshuffled within a couple rounds. If the card gives you more card plays or discards, like Expedited Efficiency, Quick Insight, or Fleet of Foot, draw it, as those cards allow for chains that will fill up your trash quicker than discarding them.

Don't be afraid to discard in general - some of her best drawing abilities require discarding some cards afterwards, and two of her most powerful cards - Sonic Vortex and Lightspeed Barrage - are fueled by her discard pile. Sonic Vortex, the simpler of the two, merely hits as many targets as cards in your discard pile - while early on it's just a nice damage card, once you get far enough in the fight, it can do serious damage to a lot of targets. Lightspeed Barrage, meanwhile, hits one target for damage equal to your trash size, shuffling your trash back into your deck afterwards. While saving it up for one big hit to take down a villain is always an option - and rarely a bad one, at that - don't be afraid to use it multiple times throughout the game, as even a 5 - 7 damage burst is a good amount of damage, and it shuffles your acceleration cards back into your deck.

▽ First Appearance Variant

While Tachyon's base power is to look at the top card of her deck and either draw or discard it, sometimes you want to be a bit more supportive to the team. If that's the case, you can play FA Tachyon. FA Tachyon lets one hero draw a card, and if that hero is someone other than Tachyon, Tachyon may then play a card - which of course, may chain into multiple cards, depending on what you play. You lose the ability to fill your trash directly that the base power provides, but you move much faster, and help your teammates in the process. The downside of this is that you may get greedy for extra plays and find yourself with precious few options left in hand. This means that you may have to take the draw for yourself occasionally to avoid burning yourself out.

Absolute Zero

General Strategy: Absolute Zero is the master of dealing himself damage for fun and profit. The key to his game plan is his array of equipment that changes how he reacts to and deals fire and cold damage. A lot of his high complexity ranking comes from the fact that he has to pay close attention to damage types to be effective, and the mental math needed to avoid blowing yourself up.

Your two most important cards as Absolute Zero are Isothermic Transducer and Null-Point Calibration Unit. These two cards allow Absolute Zero to deal cold damage whenever he takes fire damage, and to heal whenever he would take cold damage. Absolute Zero's base power is to deal himself fire or cold damage, so without one of these two cards you won't really be able to

make use of it. With it, you can use the power to either deal damage or heal yourself to tank damage for your team.

Notably, both of these cards let you play a new card when they come into play, so they are essentially free plays. If your team has to destroy Item cards, it's often worth destroying yours if you have extra copies (or Item searching cards) in your hand to save your team the pain.

You have two primary cards for finding your Items - Conductive Installation and Desperate Deployment, and one card that gets them back out of your trash - Modular Repair. If you use these to play Isothermic Transducer or Null-Point Calibration Unit, they still give you an extra card play afterwards. The fire and cold damage you deal yourself on Desperate Deployment and Modular Repair only come after your Item card comes into play, and this includes any extra plays from playing Isothermic/Null-Point. This means you could play Desperate Deployment, find Isothermic, use it to play another Desperate Deployment, find Null-Point, and then gain the benefits of both Items when dealt the fire and cold damage!

If you have both Isothermic Transducer and Null-Point Calibration Unit in play, you'll want to use your Item searching cards to find Focused Apertures, which increases your cold damage by 1. In addition to the outgoing damage bonus, this also means all your cards that deal AZ 1 fire and 1 cold damage will actually heal you for 1! This is the key to Absolute Zero, to try to get ahead on your transactions. Usually, fire to cold is an even exchange, but Focused Apertures allows you to get ahead.

This is a good time to talk about +1 damage bonuses. AZ thrives off of damage buffs. Because you usually deal yourself damage, you'll often get to "double dip" their effects. For example, if Legacy gives you +1 damage dealt, and you deal yourself 1 fire damage, you actually deal yourself 2 fire damage. If you have Isothermic Transducer out you get to deal one enemy that much cold damage. When you deal that cold damage, you benefit from Legacy's +1 damage again, so you actually deal 3 damage! It's always a good idea to keep an eye on effects increasing damage you take or deal, since they will greatly increase your damage output.

Once you've got Isothermic, Null-Point, and Focused Apertures in play (which could be as early as turn 1!) it's up to you whether you want to play cards for more damage or do additional setup for more/stronger powers. It really depends whether you need the damage now or to ramp up for later. Neither decision is necessarily right or wrong and just depends on what you need at the moment. If you decide you want to ramp up for big finishing blows, Absolute Zero's endgame is generally to use his Play and Power phases to deal as much damage as possible, then activate Coolant Blast or Thermal Shockwave in his End Phase using High-Yield Coolant Tanks for a big blast.

▽ First Appearance Variant

First Appearance Absolute Zero deals damage to both heroes and non-heroes with his power. Note that for non-heroes you can hit *up* to 2, but for heroes you **must** hit 2. One of them will

often be yourself (since you'll heal via Null Point), but the other will be a hero that will actually take damage. It's best to mitigate this by hitting beefy heroes with damage reduction (like Haka), heroes that want to take damage (like Fanatic), or to spread the love out so no one is feeling picked on.

Unity

General Strategy: Unity is a minion maker, building up a swarm of Mechanical Golems to do her bidding. She can be a bit slow to start, but once she gets going, she can output ridiculous levels of damage. As an intern rather than a full-fledged member of the Freedom Five, she greatly appreciates any support the other heroes can offer her. Her base power requires that she destroy Item cards in order to play her Mechanical Golem cards, which means that she pairs well with heroes who have a lot of Items and can afford to take the hit, like Bunker, The Wraith, or The Argent Adept. Even in the absence of these support allies however, her deck still has enough Items to remain self-sustaining. Her Supply Crates are a simple but versatile option which can be destroyed by your power to play more Golems or on your Start Phase to draw more cards. Volatile Parts provides backlash damage whenever one of her Golems is destroyed, but can also be used as Golem fuel in a pinch. Additionally, some of her Items let her play bots without the need to destroy other Items, like her Modular Workbench or her Construction Pylon. Since Unity thrives on having a solid foundation, it's often ideal to spend your first turn or two using Modular Workbench or Flash Forge to get more Items out, rather than immediately playing a Golem which will likely be destroyed if undefended.

You can't really talk about all of this framework without highlighting the centerpiece of her deck, which is those Mechanical Golems. They're each extremely powerful, but can't be played on her Play Phase, so she has to plan her turns carefully to get them out on her other four phases. She has a set of five powerful Golems based on the Freedom Five, and a host of generic Golems to round out her kit. They're mostly split into two categories: damaging bots such as Platform Bot and Raptor Bot, and structural/support bots such as Champion Bot and Swift Bot, who increase the effectiveness and staying power of Unity's field. Your plan is normally to swarm the enemy with bots, protecting them with your structural cards. Stealth Bot can soak hits for your other Golems, Swift Bot keeps your important setup cards cycling through your hand and onto the field, and Scrap Metal/Inspired Repair keep your existing Golems healthy.

Once you have a solid support network of defensive Golems and Ongoing, your finishing move will generally be deploying the Raptor Bots. The Raptor Bots are weak early game, but if you can get them out late-game, their damage scales with the number of Golems on the field, meaning that a Raptor Bot can easily deal upwards of 7 damage, and that damage is multiplicative with the number of Raptor Bots in play, if you can keep them alive. They also require no direct maintenance, so you're receiving a huge amount of passive damage without really putting in much effort. You can also sweep the field with Powered Shock Wave, which will similarly scale off of the number of Golems in play.

Overall, Unity is a bot-tastic hero who rewards planning and patience in order to be effective. Your end goal is to build up a large swarm, which means you need to play defensively and plan

against enemies who like to beat up weaker targets or have a lot of spread damage, as they have a tendency to beat up her bots and break her momentum.

▼ First Appearance Variant

FA Unity changes up her gameplan by taking away reliability and adding acceleration. While you won't have a guarantee of getting out bots fast, you do get a bit of damage to chip away at targets and will always get out something at the very least, making you more effective against villains who strip your hand. The key with FA Unity is to be adaptable. You're accepting randomness in exchange for getting your Items and Golems out faster, so it's harder to develop a consistent strategy, but you'll often be able to get online earlier, even if it's not exactly in the way you were planning. Sometimes you may get an early game Raptor Bot you weren't looking for, or a card like Powered Shock Wave that would normally be used after you're set up, but just be flexible, and it'll work out in the end.

🗑️ Scavenger Unity

Scavenger Unity plays a lot more fast and loose than her other variants, allowing her to be more aggressive with her low HP Golems. Normally, Unity has to set up a framework to keep her weaker Golems alive, but here, she can afford to throw out lower HP bots, knowing that she has a reliable way to recycle them without Robot Reclamation. This means that she is also less susceptible to early discards from the villain, as she can stash Golems and Items in her trash to play later, and use her energy to get other key cards in play, rather than lamenting that Stealth Bot is in her trash where she can't access it. She can also cycle Bee Bot as a pseudo One-Shot, cycling it in as needed to remove Ongoing. With all of this cycling, Volatile Parts becomes extremely valuable, especially with Champion Bot to boost Unity's damage.

The Argent Adept

General Strategy: The Argent Adept is the highest complexity hero in the set, and as such, writing a "beginner's guide" can seem a little contradictory. However, like most things, Argent isn't as complicated as he first seems, and my hope is that this guide will lower the barrier of entry to a very rewarding character.

The first step to understanding the Argent Adept is to recognize his limitations. Argent is the most support-focused hero in the game, with very few cards that deal damage directly (other than to yourself.) You will want a good understanding of how your allies decks work so you know how to help them. Your deck is also composed largely of Ongoing cards that have no immediate benefit when played, so a bit of planning is required. However, your Melody, Harmony, and Rhythm cards, when played correctly, will coalesce into a symphony that bolsters all of your allies, and you will see your teammates operating at a level of effectiveness that they could only dream of reaching on their own, spurred on by your music.

So how do you become a Virtuoso? Taking a look at Argent's Ongoing, you'll immediately notice his special effects: ♪ **Perform** and ♪ **Accompany**. These are not powers, meaning that they cannot be activated without help from the powers on Argent's Instrument cards. However, they also do not have the same rules restrictions as a power, so you can use them multiple times per turn. This means that, given the right Instruments, you can give the same effect to multiple heroes on your turn. To get the right Instruments, you'll want to pay attention to which Ongoing you have in play, since the powers listed on the Instruments often have restrictions on what you can activate. For example, Akupunku's Drum, unsurprisingly, is entirely used for activating Rhythm cards, and many Instruments have similar restrictions. Cards like Instrumental Conjunction, Silver Shadow, and Polyphonic Flare can go a long way towards helping you get your Instruments into play. In addition, Arcane Cadence runs double duty, letting you search for your Instruments, or helping play more Ongoing if you already have the Instruments out.

If you want to get a little fancier, Alacritous Subdominant's wording allows for a sneaky interaction that helps Argent squeeze a little more out of his turn. The ♪ **Accompany** effect on this card is phrased, "You may use 1 power. If you do, put this card on the top of your deck." The trick here is that any consequences of the first sentence must resolve completely before the card returns to the deck. What this means is that if you target yourself, you are immediately allowed to use a power, and if you can use an Instrument's power to activate the ♪ **Accompany** on Alacritous Subdominant again, you can potentially create long chains where you use 3-4 powers before finally being forced to put Alacritous Subdominant away. You'll have to dedicate an ♪ **Accompany** activation on each of your powers to keeping the chain going, but you're able to use the ♪ **Perform** sections to greatly support your allies in the process.

It can be tempting to get Argent fully set up before you start contributing to the game, but the ideal way I've found to play Argent is to get out a couple Instruments, a few Ongoing cards, and then just work with what you have. Argent's role is to bolster his teammates, not be a one-man band. If you're spending a turn or two giving everyone extra cards, healing, or card plays, your teammates will appreciate that significantly more than you spending four turns getting set up and then a turn or two pulling ridiculous combos by yourself. Argent can draw a ton of cards, heal himself, and give himself a bunch extra card plays/powers, but by doing that, you're typically not moving the game state forward much, and you're forcing other players to sit and watch a long, unwieldy turn. Also, don't be afraid to lose your Instruments. They're great fodder for Item destruction, and you have a lot of ways to bring them back. Cards like Instrumental Conjunction and Vernal Sonata can pull from your trash, so if you lose an Instrument, don't worry. You'll see it again sooner than you think.

▽ First Appearance Variant

FA Argent Adept sacrifices consistency for speed. You get to play the top card of your deck, which will allow you to set up twice as fast, but you lose early access to ♪ **Perform** effects, which will leave you at the mercy of your draw until you can find a proper Instrument. As the power name *Improvise* suggests, this version of Argent leans even more into the "work with

what's available" mentality. Strategically, your gameplan doesn't change very much, but you may have to switch your specific strategy mid-game to make your plans work.

Fanatic

General Strategy: Fanatic is an avenging angel of the Lord. Her primary role is a damage dealer, smiting the villains with her holy power. Her main gimmick is that once she gets to 10 or fewer HP, she becomes much more powerful, making playing Fanatic a balancing act: keep your HP high enough to stay alive, but low enough to maximize your power. Her main tools for this are two of her Relic cards: her Aegis of Resurrection, allowing her to get hit mostly without consequence as it brings her back from the brink, and her Rosary of the Mysteries, which serves the dual purpose of cycling your deck faster to help you find useful cards like the Aegis, and giving you an HP buffer if you haven't managed to find it yet. The Aegis does have the drawback of healing her whenever it's destroyed, meaning early on it can undo your hard work if it gets destroyed by spontaneous Item destruction, but it is still an instrumental card in allowing you to take risks with Fanatic.

Fanatic's main role on a team is applying consistent offensive pressure, using her arsenal of One-Shots and weapons to spread holy retribution around the field. Her signature weapon is her sword Absolution. Absolution (at 10 or fewer HP) deals 3 instances of damage, meaning that she appreciates damage buffs more than other characters, as even a single +1 earns you an extra 3 damage. Sacrosanct Martyr, which lets her trade health for damage, allows her to get to the red zone faster (worth noting, this is not fixed, meaning damage buffs will affect it as well). Finally, you have her flashiest card, Wrathful Retribution, a card that deals damage on Start Phase equal to her missing HP. This is a tricky card to get off, but if you can, it can very quickly be a game-ender.

Additionally, Fanatic plays as an effective tank and support, due to her defensive options, healing, and general disregard for death. Brutal Censure can essentially remove a target from play by erasing its game text, useful against villains like Blade and Dawn, though it should be noted this does not remove keywords. Anoint Allies is one of her best support cards, giving her allies a damage buff, and her as well if she's near death. It's worth mentioning that these cards deal damage to her on her Start Phase, which is a double-edged sword. This can help her reach the danger zone, but can kill you if you're not careful. Undaunted will give her some durability, as will Holy Nova whilst also healing your allies.

The complexity of Fanatic lies in the opportunity cost of your cards. Your cards have second effects when you're below 10 HP, but there may be times when you're not there yet, and you need to decide what cards to play. Is Prayer of Desperation still worth it if you're not getting the two card plays it can provide? Should you attack the enemy, or hit yourself to get closer to your maximum potential? These are questions that you'll be asking yourself constantly, and the correct answer may vary depending on the board state. You're at your most powerful in the late-game, but you need to make sure the game doesn't get out of control, or you may never get there.

Lastly, a special note about End of Days. This card is a full reset, wiping the whole board with the exception of Relics and character cards, so it's not a card that can be played on a whim. It is useful as a desperation play to level the field, which can pull tougher villains like Voss away from their alternate loss conditions and give you a chance to get back in the game. However, it can lead to some bad feelings if you destroy everyone's setup, so always communicate with your team and use your judgment when deciding whether this powerful card is necessary for victory. In addition, End of Days takes a full round to go off, and can often be a cloud over your team's head during that round. While you're waiting for End of Days to offer relief, your teammates will be extremely hesitant to play any meaningful cards, so be aware that End of Days has a tendency to slow the tempo of the game to a crawl. Villains will have no such qualms, however, and will use the heroes' reluctance as an opening to strike, so be careful.

▼ First Appearance Variant

FA Fanatic takes away her innate damage output and replaces it with guaranteed Relics as well as higher self damage. Combined with a lower max HP, this means that Fanatic can get below 10 HP faster, sharply boosting her mid-game effectiveness. However, Discover can also be unreliable, meaning that you may not get the Relics you need when you need them, and you may find yourself below 10 HP with no Aegis in sight. This means that to be effective (and keep yourself alive), you'll need to be very mindful of what Relics you have, and what your plan is if you don't have your Aegis on hand by the time you hit your danger zone.

☠ Haunted Fanatic

So, you pick up Haunted Fanatic, and your eyes drift to the bottom right corner of her card. Congratulations. You have discovered the silliest variant in the history of Sentinels. Long gone are the days of trying to get yourself down to the danger zone. Now, you start there and stay there.

This means that if you're fortunate enough to draw Absolution in your starting hand, you can deal 7 damage on turn 1. If not, you can either use your base power to summon it, or take advantage of one of your other cards that give you special effects when you're under 10 HP. If you ever feel threatened, summon your Aegis of Resurrection and rest assured that you won't be going down anytime soon. Remember, summoning pulls from your trash too. You shouldn't have to summon it every turn, as most villains don't heavily target the lowest HP. This leaves your power phase free for other shenanigans, making you a terrifying damage dealer. In addition, you pair extremely well with Captain Cosmic, who can give you a Reaction letting you use a power, which means you don't have to waste your own time pulling the Aegis.

Overall, Haunted Fanatic is aggressive and durable to the point of near-absurdity, and you shouldn't have too much trouble getting her to shine. She makes Wrathful Retribution much less useful, but compensates with a ton of power in the early game, which goes a long way to getting the villain under control. If she does somehow manage to fall...don't worry. Just flip her over and read her incapacitated ability. Yes, that one. You'll know it when you see it.

Captain Cosmic

General Strategy: Captain Cosmic is a support hero, dedicated to augmenting the abilities of his allies rather than engaging in direct conflict. About half of his deck consists of 4 HP Constructs that he can attach to his allies in order to increase their effectiveness, whether that be by defending and healing them, or allowing them to do extra damage and use more powers. His base power allows him to play cards faster, which is helpful as his cards don't tend to give him extra plays. He also gains acceleration from his signature Construct, Cosmic Crest, in addition to providing him with protection.

Captain Cosmic's Constructs are potent, but frail, suffering especially against villains who attack the target with the lowest HP. For this reason, the other half of Captain Cosmic's deck is dedicated to interacting with the Constructs. Cards like Unflagging Animation increase the staying power of your Constructs by granting them DR, and Conservation of Energy and Destructive Response lessen the blow of losing a Construct by rewarding Cosmic with card draw and damage respectively. Conservation of Energy also allows you to play a Construct from your trash as a one-time boost, allowing you to get a key Construct back in play. He can trigger these cards himself by using his One-Shots Potent Disruption and Construct Cataclysm, both of which allow him to convert underperforming Constructs into a damage source, in addition to loading his trash with Construct cards for the second half of Construct Cataclysm.

His Constructs are quite simple, and you won't be playing many of them in a single turn. So why is his complexity as high as it is? The inherent complexity of Captain Cosmic comes from the fact that he rewards a good awareness of the game. The key skill to learn is figuring out who will make the best use of a given Construct. For example, Autonomous Blade is much more useful on a damage dealer like Ra than a support hero who deals barely any damage like Argent Adept. Using your judgment to figure out who wants what at a given time is key to mastering Captain Cosmic. In addition, having the majority of your Constructs in other play areas means that you'll need to be aware of where your Constructs are, their current HP, which ones require maintenance, and which ones can be destroyed to fuel cards like Potent Disruption.

▽ First Appearance Variant

FA Captain Cosmic trades his acceleration and reliability for damage and more durable Constructs. This means that he can help push through villains with large HP pools, like Akash or Mocktriarch. However, his Constructs are the ones dealing the damage, meaning that you need at least one Construct in play to use the power, and that any damage boosts that Captain Cosmic has will not affect the damage dealt. This may mean that you have more trouble recovering from a villain destroying your cards, so you'll have to rely on cards like Conservation of Energy and Heart of Gold much more frequently to keep your engine running.

Tempest

General Strategy: Tempest is a weather-controlling alien, and that theme comes across loud and clear in his playstyle. The most basic strategy for Tempest is to build up a massive storm,

battering your enemies turn after turn. He excels at controlling minion-heavy villains, as most of his Weather cards hit multiple targets, and he's also able to play as a pretty solid support character using cards like Reclaim from the Deep or Displaced Ambassador, in addition to healing with Gift of Val'Maera. He also receives numerous benefits for having more Weather cards in play, so you'll want to get as many out as possible to take advantage of damaging One-Shots that scale with Weather in play, or Shielding Winds, one of the best defensive cards in the game. However, a massive storm is difficult to maintain, and most of his Weather cards come with a cost, either discarding cards or damaging your teammates.

So how do you bring the storm? His quickest setup comes from his card Alien Weather Patterns. This lets you discover a whopping three cards from your deck, and return your trash to your deck in the process, setting you up in case your Weather cards get destroyed. However, Alien Weather Patterns won't always be available to you, in which case you need another plan. Cards like Lightning Slash and Chain Lightning also discover a Weather card and reward you for any Weather already in play. Maerynian Aquaculturist will passively reward you for playing Weather cards and assist you in paying for your existing Weather cards, in addition to providing you with a useful power which gives you control over the environment *and* additional draws. Rolling Fog is also useful against target-heavy villains, and will often pay for itself in draws. This is the trick to Tempest, to find a consistent draw engine that allows you to do everything you want to do.

But what if you can't do that? Maybe you can't get your draw engine up and running, or the villain doesn't have an endless supply of minions for you to pelt with hailstones and lightning to keep Rolling Fog going?

In these cases, Tempest comes prepared, slashing targets with his Atlantean Stormblade. The Stormblade allows you to keep a smaller selection of Weather cards in play without sacrificing effectiveness. It destroys your Weather cards and deals damage as a result, allowing you to use the Weather cards for a shorter amount of time and destroy them once they no longer benefit you, or they get too expensive to keep around. This can be a viable strategy if you can't hold a big storm together, or if you're playing against single-target villains where Tempest's widespread damage isn't as valuable. Combine this with Electrical Storm and you'll have a respectable 5 damage per turn, in addition to any other cards you have. Thunderclap pairs particularly well with Electrical Storm, and you can use cards like Reclaim from the Deep to recycle your useful Weather to feed the sword.

▽ First Appearance Variant

FA Tempest has a playstyle similar to that of the Stormblade, with a little bit of random acceleration sprinkled in. He sacrifices reliability and consistent spread damage for speed and mobility. You'll be constantly destroying your own cards and being rewarded with plays off of the top of your deck. This creates an interesting dynamic when played with the Stormblade, where you can either destroy a Weather card using the blade itself, or using your innate power to accelerate your own plays. You'll be harder-pressed to keep the same massive storms that base

Tempest produces, but you're rewarded with a constant cycle of cards and a much more dynamic, flowing playstyle.

Haka

General Strategy: Haka is an immortal Maori warrior, and as one may expect, he hits hard and shrugs off big hits like they're nothing. He is also a wise and experienced combatant, which appears mechanically in his ability to draw lots of cards, giving him a wide range of options - but this wisdom and experience also hinders him, as it makes him slower than many other heroes.

Haka's most notable cards are his titular Hakas - an Ongoing that gives a small boost for a turn when played, before self-destructing to let Haka discard cards for great effect. Haka of Battle increases his damage and lets him hit someone hard, perfect for taking out a tanky target or knocking a sizable chunk out of the villain's HP. Haka of Frenzy makes his damage irreducible, and lets him punch a lot of targets hard - the perfect way to clear the field of pesky Citizens or Gene-Bound hiding behind tougher allies. Finally, there's Haka of Recovery, which decreases the damage Haka takes, and then lets him regenerate high amounts of HP - a powerful effect on its own, but it truly shines when you combine it with two other cards: Tā Moko decreases the damage Haka takes and allows him to draw cards, which is great for fueling your Haka. Tiaki Defender lets Haka redirect damage from his allies to himself for a turn. When these three cards are played together, Haka can take hits that would decimate his allies and only take a few scratches in return, before regenerating all the HP he lost (and then some) afterwards.

But of course, Haka is more than just his Hakas. His Ongoing, Dance in the Fray and Taonga Mana - serve a crucial role in keeping him up to speed. Dance in the Fray lets Haka hit people whenever his Ongoing is destroyed, letting you get an extra bonus out of a Haka breaking or retaliating against villains destroying your stuff; as well as giving you the power to draw and play 1 card, helping him keep pace with faster heroes. Taonga Mana, meanwhile, lets you draw a card whenever you destroy a target, and can be destroyed in its Start Phase to draw 3 cards (and hit someone, if Dance in the Fray is out). The other major parts of his kit are his two Items - his Mere lets him hit someone for 3 damage and draw a card, while his Taiaha lets him hit 2 people for 3 damage, and can be broken in the Start Phase to destroy an Ongoing. The key to Haka is to establish a good draw engine early on using these cards, and quickly remove threats that would slow you down.

Finally, there is one more card that deserves a special mention: Rampage. Rampage is a One-Shot that lets Haka deal 5 damage to every non-hero target and draw a card whenever he destroys something, but at the cost of also dealing 2 damage to all heroes - damage that he can not redirect with Tiaki Defender. Rampage is a powerful way to clear the field and fill up Haka's hand, but it can also be a great hindrance for other heroes, especially if a minion maker such as Unity or Captain Cosmic is in play. That said, if you're fighting a minion-heavy villain, Rampage combined with Taonga Mana means that you draw *two* cards for each target you destroy, which can allow you to fuel a massive Haka on subsequent turns.

▽ First Appearance Variant

FA Haka trades off the consistent damage from his base card to instead be able to destroy a target with 3 or fewer HP, as well as regain 3 HP - notably, the HP regeneration is not dependent on the success of the first effect, something that's easy to miss on a first read-through. FA Haka won't be hitting as hard or consistently as base Haka, however, he trades this out for a stronger defense, which allows you to lean harder into cards like Tiaki Defender, and play a little more fast and loose with your aggressive cards.

☞ Werewolf Haka

Werewolf Haka takes a completely different route from the other variants, focusing on his HP total. He has two different effects for his base power, depending on where his HP stands in relation to other Hero targets on the field. If he has the highest HP, he draws 3 cards, loading his hand up for a big move in the future. If he gets lower than other heroes, he summons a Haka card, releasing all of the cards he built while he was at a higher HP. This means that, depending on how hard you want to lean into his base power, you'll want to pay careful attention to your own HP, and where you stand in relation to your allies.

If you're planning to take heavy advantage of your base power, you may want to use cards like Tiaki Defender or Tā Moko to adjust your HP, either by intentionally drawing fire or reducing the damage you take. Plan well, and you should be able to swing back to almost full HP from the brink of death, and still have enough fuel for a Haka of Battle the following turn.

Ra

General Strategy: Ra is a blazing sun god, and as you might expect, he likes to burn things. Ra is designed to give new players the option to play a simple 'burn anything that moves' style, taking advantage of high-output One-Shots like Fire Blast to get the job done. His classic combo is Fire Blast + Staff of Ra for a clean 12 damage hit. This works perfectly fine, but if you want to go deeper, Ra has a ton of interesting little interactions that can push his already high damage to absolutely absurd heights.

The first component of unlocking Ra's full potential is Solar Flare. Be mindful, as 5 fixed damage per turn is a hefty toll to pay, but in conjunction with the Staff, Ra's output becomes absolutely ridiculous. For example, without any boosts, playing Fire Blast and activating your base power with Fiery Tornado in play will output a total of 11 damage over the course of a round. Add in your Staff and Solar Flare before playing this, and a full round with the same plays will net you a staggering total of *29 damage*, even without the doubling effect. Excavation can help you set up for these silly amounts of damage by cycling Environment cards back into the deck in exchange for Discovering Ra's useful cards, and Scorched Earth can assist you in destroying enough Environment cards to take full advantage of Excavation. You can also be remarkably cavalier about destroying your Staff for the doubling effect. Considering that you have three copies of the Staff and four copies of the card that allows you to summon the Staff (remember, summon can also pull from the trash), your favorite weapon is never far away.

▽ First Appearance Variant

FA Ra, fitting for one of the simplest heroes, has a similar playstyle to his base variant - instead of doing 2 damage with his base power, he only deals 1 damage, but can salvage an Ongoing or play a card. This tends to mean you can do more on your turns - set up faster and use more One-Shots - but you can also find yourself a bit starved for cards, limiting your options and making it harder to fuel Fiery Tornado, so you may need to use Consuming Flame and Living Conflagration to fill up your hand in a pinch.

☞ Backdraft Ra

Backdraft Ra can be an absolute powerhouse, allowing Ra to play a supportive game and deal with minions more easily. However, reading the power carefully will reveal a little hiccup in the plan. "Ra deals 4 targets 1 fire damage each." Not *up to* 4. If there are only two villain targets on the field, you have to hit two heroes as well to be able to use this power. Normally, a little collateral damage isn't the worst thing in the world, but with Solar Flare and the Staff on the field, you're dealing 16 damage total, so you have to be careful to make sure there's enough villain and environment targets on the field to be able to use this power at all. In some games, this won't be an issue, but if you're fighting Spite in the Wagner Mars Base, you may have to search your deck for a different power. If Captain Cosmic or Argent Adept is in the game, you may be able to combo your power with Flesh of the Sun God, or otherwise, Absolute Zero always appreciates fire damage. If you can use this power successfully, your allies will greatly appreciate the extra cards, all while watching the minions in front of them burn to a crisp.

Villains

Baron Blade

General Strategy: Baron Blade is the intended tutorial villain, and as such, is rarely overwhelming. However, this doesn't mean he doesn't have a few tricks up his sleeve, and the wrong approach to the Baron can spell doom for the heroes. Baron Blade's main draw is that he introduces an alternate loss condition in the form of a limit to his trash size. If, at the start of his turn, he ever has 15 cards in his trash while on his front side, **you lose**.

So, what's the trick? Baron Blade has a lot of attributes that make him a good first game. He has multiple keywords that interact in interesting ways, damage immunity, and a few threatening cards that can force you into a corner. However, the most valuable aspect of Baron Blade is that he teaches you to prioritize. You can't just cut loose and destroy every card he puts out, because every card you destroy brings Baron Blade one card closer to pulling the moon into the Earth, which is generally inconvenient for the heroes. To succeed against Blade, you have to decide which cards are unproblematic enough that they can be left in play, and only destroy the ones that are too problematic to be left alive. For example, the damage dealt by his Blade Battalions scales with the HP of the card, so it is generally better to leave them alive at 1 or 2 HP than to destroy them completely. Conversely, Mobile Defense Platform and Backlash Field Generator are strong defensive cards, and will whittle your HP and stall out your game until the

heroes either lose, or the countdown is complete. Mobile Defense Platform in particular is crucial. In addition to making Blade immune to damage, it also plays and discards cards, swarming the field with Minions or filling his trash, bringing you closer to losing via HP loss or by his alternate loss condition. Your experience with individual cards may vary, but the point about carefully deciding which cards need to go is imperative to success. In addition, be wary of cards like Hasten Doom which accelerate the rate at which he plays cards, as chains of One-Shots can fill his trash much faster than a new player may have anticipated.

His reverse side is fairly simple, beating down the heroes directly. If you survive the front side, Baron Blade doesn't wreck your setup when he flips, so you will usually be prepared for a damage race, and the 15-card limit no longer exists on the back side.

Critical Event

Mad Bomber Blade is the Baron's Critical Event. He's been defeated, ruined, presumed dead - now, he's here to burn the whole place to the ground.

Mad Bomber Blade operates by shuffling cards into the Environment deck - any targets (so Minions and Devices) he plays go into the Environment, and he puts a card under it at the end of his turn. This, by itself, does not sound scary. However, whenever the top card of the Environment is one of Blade's cards, he deals 2 projectile and 2 fire damage to all non-Villains, before putting that card under himself, winning the game when he has 12 - H cards under him. And of course, he also discards the top card of the Environment deck in his start phase, increasing the odds you'll find his bombs. Damage reduction can be helpful here, but stall too much, and you risk meeting his alternate loss condition.

So, how do you beat him? Well, this is a version of Blade that's down on his luck and out of tricks - simply put, you punch him. This fight is a straightforward damage race - the potential for a defeat due to enough bombs being detonated is scary, but odds are, you're gonna get incapacitated before that happens, especially in a hostile environment. Given that he won't be playing Devices, he's relatively undefended with the exception of Living Forcefield, so being fast and aggressive is the key to victory here.

Citizen Dawn

General Strategy: Citizen Dawn is the leader of an army of superpowered Citizens, and makes heavy use of her Citizen underlings to ruin your day. She plays a lot of relatively low HP targets very quickly, which are themed in groups with matching nicknames. She supports them with a series of nasty Ongoings which keep her Citizens healthy and numerous. Like Baron Blade, Dawn is an exercise in prioritization. Her Citizens are generally fairly manageable on their own, but can be overwhelming once multiple members of a group are in play. In addition, Dawn is completely immune to damage on her back side, which she reaches once you destroy too many Citizens. She'll flip back to her normal state once enough Citizens are on the board. Note that Dawn counts as a Citizen, so don't forget to add her to the count for her flip condition!

With this in mind, there are two general approaches that players will use. Either focus fire on her and don't let her flip, or flip her as fast as possible, then flip her back. This generally depends on her starting lineup. If they have any synergies or effects you can't ignore, you'll most likely need to take them out in order to survive. In order to help you make that decision, let's go over the various Citizen groups! These are roughly sorted by how important it is to take them out.

- Citizens Truth/Dare: These two guys hate each other. If one is played, the other will bury itself. Of the two, Citizen Truth is much more likely to ruin your game by making all other Citizens immune to damage in addition to a blanket 1 DR to himself. Taking him out is a very high priority. Dare is less important as he won't stop you from winning the game, but +1 damage to Hero targets is going to hurt a lot, especially to minion masters like Captain Cosmic and Unity.
- Citizens Hammer/Anvil: Anvil is going to annoy you a lot. Partially because he gives everyone DR 1, partially because he keeps bringing back his arsonist friend and giving him *extra* DR. That being said, fire damage isn't *always* bad...
 - Note: If both Anvil and Truth are out, you're going to have a really rough time. If you have any deck manipulation, it might be time to fish for Dare to get rid of Truth.
- Citizens Blood/Sweat/Tears: This trio starts off pretty benign, but their effects scale pretty scarily once more of them are played. One of the hidden things to note about this trio is that all of their effects are during the End Phase. This means if a member exists from a previous round and another one is played, their boosted effects will trigger almost immediately. They'll sneak up on you and ruin your entire hand and play area. A good target of opportunity if they're sitting with no defenses.
- Citizens Spring/Summer/Autumn/Winter: If you leave multiple members of this quartet around, they'll do extra things during the Start Phase. Spring heals more, Summer deals more damage, but Autumn and Winter both destroy setup, which may be more important for you depending on the Heroes you're playing with. Not a huge deal if you leave two standing, but more than that and you might be facing more than you can handle.
- Citizens Assault and Battery: These two are all about damage, damage, damage. They don't provide any defensive buffs, they just cause large amounts of damage. If you think you can survive them, excellent. Otherwise, to save Unity's poor bots, you may need to prioritize them.

Dawn's Ongoing mostly help her and her Citizens stay alive or return after they're destroyed. If you're clever, you may be able to use cards like Return With The Dawn to get her out of her immune state faster. But there's one more card that will most likely define your play experience with Dawn:

Devastating Aurora.

No two words in the Sentinels community inspire quite as much fear. There's probably not a single Villain card in the game that can ruin a hero's day as quickly as this one. It completely

wrecks your setup (unless you're a target heavy deck), no questions asked. If you have any deck manipulation on your team, you will most likely try to avoid this card as much as possible. That being said, if it is played, **don't panic**. Definitive Edition lets heroes build back up quickly with the amount of discover/summon effects there are. You started from zero, you can build back up from zero. The trick is to use your immediate tools from your hand such as damaging One-Shots to create an opening to get your slower heroes back in the game.

Critical Event

Sunrise Citizen Dawn is likely the most difficult Critical Event in the core box. She starts the game with a handful of Citizens and one Ongoing, Channel the Eclipse. In addition, all of her Ongoing are indestructible. Channel the Eclipse gives Dawn widespread damage and acceleration, and if the wrong Citizens come into play, Dawn can become overwhelming very quickly, since you need to destroy Citizens to remove the Ongoing from the field.

Thankfully, the same notes apply for the most part as her standard counterpart. The same Citizens are dangerous, with a special note to watch out for Citizen Truth, since he removes your only avenue to remove the Ongoing from play by making Citizens immune to damage. A major difference from standard Dawn, however, is that she doesn't have a flip condition. You are free to destroy Citizens at your leisure, especially since her End Phase scales with the number of Citizens in play. However, being too cavalier about this may mean that you find yourself with a board full of Ongoing with no avenue to remove them. Here, the key to victory is moderation and pacing, making sure that you have an escape avenue if you're taking too much damage or if you have an Ongoing that's giving you too much grief. If you lose once or twice, don't feel discouraged, Sunrise Dawn is a very challenging fight, and there are combinations of cards that may spell disaster for certain heroes if they come out early.

Grand Warlord Voss

General Strategy: Grand Warlord Voss is the hardest fight in the core box. However, he's difficult in a very simple way with relatively little nuance compared to other villains. He's going to play a lot of minions very quickly, gaining -2 damage reduction for each Gene-Bound in play. He's going to hammer you with his giant spaceships and Thorathians, overwhelming you with a tide of foes while he sits safely behind them, evoking his theme as a military commander. At the start of his turn, if there are more than 10 villain targets in play, **you lose**.

With all of this in mind, a clear strategy emerges. If a target shows up, take it out quickly and prepare for the next wave. If you give Voss breathing room, he'll gladly take it. Cards like Forced Deployment and Protective Detail will quickly flood the field. Gene Doctor Kronz and the Thorathian Conquering Fleet will destroy your setup. Vyktor and Tamar will deal damage, scaling with Devices and Gene-Bounds respectively. Meanwhile, his Quark Drive Translocator will continue spawning targets, helping Voss to overwhelm the planet. Also keep in mind that each of Voss's Gene-Bound minions has a unique damage immunity, so you may need to rely on your teammates to handle a tricky minion that you can't deal with. For example, Haka

exclusively deals melee damage, meaning that he cannot destroy the Grunt Guards. Voss isn't complicated, but what he lacks in nuance, he makes up for in consistency and damage output, making him a very tough fight. However, he is very momentum-based, and therein lies his weakness. He relies exclusively on Gene Doctor Kronz and his Conquering Fleet to destroy your setup enough to become unstoppable, so if you can take them out, he becomes much easier to deal with. On the flipside, if you can't get an early lead, he may spiral out of control very quickly. Keep an eye on what's affecting the pace of the battle, and Voss becomes much more manageable. A tricky environment like the Ruins of Atlantis may give Voss the edge at the wrong moment, so be careful when playing in an environment that buffs the villain.

If you manage to wade your way through all of the Gene-Bounds, Voss flips and gets involved personally. On his backside, Voss deals significant damage to both the highest and lowest HP heroes, but loses his massive defense. He also Discovers a Device, ranging from one of his spaceships to his Translocator. Depending on your team composition, flipping Voss may be necessary, but there is an alternative strategy, leaving Voss on his front side and destroying all but one Gene-Bound target. This does mean that you'll generally have to punch through a -2 damage reduction, so if you choose to take this route, a source of irreducible damage can be helpful.

Critical Event

Censor replaces Voss as the Critical Event for the deck, losing access to Voss's Gene-Bound army in favor of a damage race. Censor only has 30 HP, but has an innate -1 to all damage taken, and reactive healing if he manages to pull a non-Thorathian target in response to your damage. He also deals damage whenever a Gene-Bound would be played, meaning that burst cards like Protective Detail and Forced Deployment can convert into large amounts of damage. In addition, he starts with a Thorathian and a Device in play, which can make it hard to get going. Censor can be a decent threat, but he is much easier than Grand Warlord Voss, and will usually fall if you burn down his HP fast enough. Censor's DR/healing can be a nightmare for heroes who love chip damage, so the trick with Censor is to stay patient and wait until you are able to take him down in a few good blows.

Omnitron

General Strategy: Omnitron is the most systematic, evenly paced villain in the box.

Unsurprising, considering it's a robot. On one turn, it will **Fabricate**, building a massive army of lethal drones and weapons. On the next turn, it will **Exterminate**, blasting apart any heroes unfortunate to be standing in its path. This cycle is repeated until the heroes are all destroyed.

Omnitron has a few quirks that affect the way the heroes approach the fight. First, it only deals damage to the heroes every other turn. This is a double-edged sword, because it means that you get a reliable reprieve from the damage, but Omnitron typically deals far more damage in a single turn than the average villain when it does enter Exterminate mode, to compensate for that reprieve. Second, Omnitron has zero One-Shots. Every card is a Device or Ongoing, which means that immediate boosts in acceleration are very rare. The only time that you will get a

surprise burst from Omnitron is if it manages to play Protomatter Converter or S-84 Automaton Drones on its front side, and then immediately activates the Fabricate effect. It is also notable that Omnitron destroys its own Ongoing. Granted, there are negative consequences to this, but if you plan ahead, you may be able to get a pesky Ongoing out of play before it can harm you, without wasting your own resources.

In general, the trick to beating Omnitron is to plan ahead. Since you have a general idea of what's coming a turn before it happens, Omnitron rewards good awareness of the board state, and the ability to prioritize threats. Most of Omnitron's Ongoing cards are dedicated to destroying Hero setup or otherwise stalling out the game long enough to batter you down with an army of robots. Adaptive Plating Subroutine can be annoying for heroes like Captain Cosmic or Haka which only have one or two damage types at their disposal. Many of the Devices can be a pressing threat. However, certain cards may only be particularly dangerous on one side, so if Omnitron is about to Fabricate, you may not want to waste an Ongoing destruction card on Electromagnetic Railgun, which does almost nothing on the Fabricate side, especially if there are other Devices that have a nasty Fabricate effect.

In short, be patient, plan well, and don't leave a single Device standing. Omnitron is a fairly straightforward fight, as long as you're careful.

Critical Event

Cosmic Omnitron is a difficult fight. It replaces the predictability of base Omnitron with a much faster, more erratic experience, where it will rapidly heal, then deal large amounts of damage in the same turn. You don't have to deal with Devices on the field, but since a Device will heal Cosmic Omnitron and then play the top card of the Villain deck, you can end up with massive chains of Devices loading up under Omnitron's character card, followed by a huge burst of damage to the highest HP during the End Phase. In addition, the Exterminate and Fabricate effects now happen every turn, meaning that Omnitron's Ongoing are twice as lethal as usual.

As such, this game usually turns into a pretty straightforward damage race, where all of the Heroes are trying to rush down Omnitron faster than it can heal, but there are some niche strategies that may help in a pinch. If you have deck control, it may help to discard Ongoing from the top of Omnitron's deck, keeping them out of play and lessening the pain of the Start and End Phases. You also want to try to anticipate when Omnitron's pile of stored cards hits its peak, and plan your defensive cards around it. Keep your damage output high, keep an eye on your HP, destroy Ongoing whenever you can, and Cosmic Omnitron shouldn't give you too much trouble.

The Matriarch

General Strategy: The Matriarch is a simple villain to understand, but that doesn't make her any less deadly. The Matriarch's goal is to swarm you with her army of birds, often getting many card plays in a row due to the fact that each of her Fowl cards play the top card of her deck, and her Mask of the Matriarch plays the top card when she plays a non-Fowl card the first time each

turn. While the Fowls have only 1 HP each, the rate at which they enter play can very quickly overwhelm you. This is a villain with a lot of spread damage in her End Phase, but also a villain who spread damage is very effective against. Heroes like Tempest can very quickly clean her field, but don't get too comfortable. Between quickly cycling through her deck and Darken the Sky, the Fowl quickly get put back in rotation and come back into play equally as fast. This means you need to keep on top of getting rid of them, but be cautious about this. Her magical Cohorts, Huginn and Muninn, are bigger targets, and much more threatening. Huginn provides The Matriarch, himself, and his companion with damage resistance, while Muninn punches you for destroying Fowl and provides himself, his companion, and The Matriarch with a damage bonus. Carrion Fields also makes them more effective by having them both hit every hero target.

For the most part, you want to flip the Matriarch, accomplished by destroying her Mask. Matriarch will start dealing more damage, but without the Mask, she gets fewer card plays; and since she hits the highest HP target, your low-HP targets (such as Unity's bots or squishy heroes like Argent Adept) will be safer.

Critical Event

The Mocktriarch is Matriarch's Critical Event. This version changes her gameplay in some key ways, but she's still trying to swarm you with birds. The biggest change is that the Cohorts are helping you, but only after you get rid of the Mask of the Matriarch. When playing against the Mocktriarch, you may only deal 1 damage at a time to the mask, but once it's defeated, it's removed from the game. This means that any heroes who are able to deal multiple instances of damage will be valuable. The Mask also removes the Cohorts' game texts until it is destroyed. When it's gone, the Cohorts will redirect their damage to Mocktriarch and their support effects will go to the lowest HP hero character.

In addition to these big changes, this version of the Matriarch will hit the heroes harder, doing mass damage in the Start Phase and hitting the highest HP target in the End Phase. This means she can beat you down faster than base Matriarch unless you have characters who can take a lot of hits, like Legacy or Haka. She is still a damage race at the end of the day, and a solid team should be able to dispatch her without too much hassle.

Akash'Bhuta

General Strategy: Akash'Bhuta is a gargantuan spirit of the Earth, with an equally gargantuan 200 HP. Her goal is to overwhelm the heroes with a barrage of her Primeval Limbs, which serve to ruin a hero's day by damaging the heroes, preventing them from counterattacking, or breaking the tools that the heroes bring to the fight. Interposing Stalagmites and Ensnaring Brambles provide Akash with an effective shield against attacking heroes, while her other limbs beat the heroes down and prevent them from setting up further. Meanwhile, Akash is discarding an Environment card with each Limb she spawns, setting her up to flip once the Environment trash is reshuffled. Her One-Shots are mostly centered around putting more Limbs into play or accelerating her flip by playing or discarding Environment cards. On her flip side, Akash starts

dealing damage directly in the form of 2 fire damage to everything on the field. This makes Captain Cosmic and Unity miserable, in addition to potentially destroying helpful Environment targets.

Akash'Bhuta has one of the most consistent openings in the game, and you will very rarely see her have an off turn. She will almost always put out multiple limbs on her turn, and there is very rarely a turn where she will not be dealing damage. Through all this, there is one detail that allows the heroes to fight back. Akash is fighting with her own body, putting her own essence on the line to take the heroes down. In gameplay terms, this means that if you destroy her Limb, it hurts her for fixed damage equal to that Limb's maximum HP. The biggest trap in this fight is attacking Akash directly. Oftentimes, she will have Interposing Stalagmites in play, meaning that you're punching through -1 or -2 damage reduction to land a blow. Even if she doesn't, by choosing to target Akash instead of Primeval Limbs, you're allowing her to set up further, until there are so many targets on the field that the heroes simply drown, and it's very unlikely that you will be able to rush down 200 HP before the Primeval Limbs destroy you.

In short, the strategy of defeating Akash'Bhuta is to keep her Limbs in check. Unlike most of the villains in this set, there is no penalty for destroying her targets, so keep hacking away and letting her deal herself fixed damage as backlash.

Critical Event

Akash'Mecha is a fusion of nature and technology, with the two halves of her at odds with each other. This changes the flow of the fight considerably, as the Limbs become uneasy allies in your quest to take her down.

The first thing you'll notice is that the Primeval Limbs no longer are destroyed, instead, they go under Akash's character card. This means that your largest incentive to destroy the Limbs, the fixed damage that they deal to Akash upon destruction, is completely removed. The destroyed Limbs also fuel her Start Phase attack, which further disincentivizes you from trying to take them out. As a final kicker, the Limbs (along with any environment targets) will also attack Akash for you on her End Phase, meaning that Akash'Mecha serves as a difficult lesson in priorities, which is a stark counterpart to Akash'Bhuta, where you want to destroy as many Limbs as possible.

The difficulty of Akash'Mecha is that the Limbs aren't much good to you when they're destroyed, but they're just as lethal as usual to the heroes when they're in play. This means that you may have to take out Interposing Stalagmites or another disruptive Limb just to land a hit, but removing them from play will come back to bite you. She still has a multitude of Limbs that disrupt the heroes and deal a hefty amount of damage. This makes any defensive play valuable, as it means you can keep the Limbs out and have them attack Akash for you, without taking the negative drawbacks. Irreducible damage is also helpful here, letting you take the fight to Akash even when her defensive Limbs are in play. Also note that once the Limbs go under Akash, they can't come back out, so think carefully before deciding to remove a Limb from the field. The key

to defeating Akash'Mecha is to strike the balance between too many and too few Limbs on the field, which may vary depending on your team composition. If you're having trouble, you may be focusing too much or too little on Akash herself, and may have to shift that balance in one direction or another.

Environments

Megalopolis

General Strategy: Megalopolis is a fast-paced, hectic city, and a lot can happen in a few turns. The highlight of Megalopolis is the Emergency cards, which will be your biggest distraction from taking down the villains. They all follow the same general structure, where they present you a problem, and give you a full round to deal with the issue. If you choose not to (or forget to) handle the emergencies, bad things happen. You'll have to spend your valuable resources to protect your city, or find yourself taking large amounts of fixed damage if you fail. To make things worse, the Emergency cards are not Ongoing, so you'll have to interact directly with them to get anything done.

Megalopolis does have a bright side though. The law is generally on your side, and the Police Backup is always happy to shoot the villain for you. Local Legal Expert helps you replenish your hand. Just watch out for those Persistent Papparazzi, watch out for Collateral Damage destroying Ongoing, and be careful of the bursts of speed that Bustling City can provide, both to you and the villain.

Freedom Tower

General Strategy: Freedom Tower is the friendliest environment to the players. It has various rooms which mostly provide a boon to the heroes, such as Dr. Stinson's Secondary Lab providing card selection and allowing a limited sculpting of your top deck, or Mission Control, which can give you free setup. However, this doesn't mean the deck is without peril. If the enemy finds an Entry Point, it will destroy one of your rooms and make your enemy hit you harder, which can be devastating at the wrong moment. Training Simulator can cause you to be overwhelmed with foes if you're not careful, even with the free power use. Frost's Cryo Chamber will help you get back on track if your setup gets destroyed, but will slowly kill anyone who isn't Absolute Zero in the meantime. At the end of the day though, this is the home base of the heroes, which means it's a place they want to protect, and getting the Room you need can make defeating the villain all the easier.

Insula Primalis

General Strategy: Insula Primalis is the most hostile environment, and can seriously lay into both Heroes and Villains if not managed properly. Dinosaurs run rampant, targeting Heroes, Villains, and other Dinosaurs indiscriminately. If you can manipulate the circumstances, you're sometimes able to create an environment that is incredibly hostile to the villain. Many of the dinosaurs target high or low HP targets rather than doing spread damage, which can take out

annoying minions or chip away at the villain without you having to lift a finger. However, the Dinosaurs are equally happy to eat heroes, and can seriously put a dent in your defenses, or eat your Golems and Constructs. Watch out for that T-Rex! Its 5 melee damage is nothing to sneeze at. However, it's not all bad. Again, the dinosaurs will attack villains occasionally, and some Dinosaurs will even let you draw cards.

Insula Primalis is also prone to sudden swings in acceleration, with Dinosaur Stampedes hitting everything on the board with fixed damage, and River of Lava dealing 2 fire damage to everything on the board, and then summoning Imminent Eruption. Imminent Eruption is the signature card of Insula Primalis, and it can be very manageable if handled properly, and absolutely devastating if not. No other card in the game has the potential to deal each target 9 damage without any outside help, so tread lightly. If you plan on damaging Imminent Eruption, make sure you finish the job. Of course, if you have substantial damage reduction, damage immunity, or if Ra has Flesh of the Sun God active, you may be able to use the eruption to your advantage. Also, Absolute Zero loves fire damage. Do with that what you will.

Magmaria

General Strategy: Magmaria is a fairly passive environment. The Magmarians can be a nuisance depending on your team composition, but if you have any damage reduction at all, they usually won't be too much of a bother.

The core gameplay of this environment is destroying Magma Crystals, which go to your hand, and then trading them to the Magmarians for extra power. If you can put out a bunch of passive damage, you may collect a few Magma Crystals and trade them for some rewards, like extra power uses, extra defense, or recruiting them to attack the villain for you. Fiery Crystallization can also let you convert a large hand of your unused Items into Magma Crystals, which may allow you to engage with the environment more frequently. The main cards of note to be prepared for are Magmarian Throng, which can do a pretty decent chunk of spread damage if you get too complacent with leaving Magmarians around, and Crystalloid Behemoth, which hits the heroes hard if they're at higher HP than the villain.

Overall, Magmaria shouldn't be too much of an issue, but if you're having trouble, make sure you're at least keeping an eye on what targets come out, and whether taking the time to collect a Magma Crystal would improve your position. Also, the Magmarians deal primarily fire damage, meaning that Absolute Zero gets a heavy damage boost in this environment.

The Ruins of Atlantis

General Strategy: High risk, high reward. That's the name of the game in the Ruins of Atlantis. No other Environment offers you this much acceleration, but the villains will also be more than happy to take advantage of this newfound power. Cards like Atlantean Font of Power and Pillars of Hercules will give you tons of extra plays, as long as you're willing to let the villains have some too. My personal recommendation is to use these cards to get set up, then get rid of them, but some people love to ride the lightning as long as possible. Leaking Room and

Phosphorescent Chamber can both be situationally bad or good, depending on your current position. If you have the cards to spare, leaving Leaking Room out for a few turns can dampen the villain's damage enough for you to get into a more comfortable position. Phosphorescent Chamber boosts healing, but also boosts damage dealt, so it's a double-edged blade as well. The Crucible can also throw a wrench in your game, either by blowing up your minions, or playing a card at an inconvenient time. Most of the time, it's helpful, but every once in a while, it'll play a villain card, or worse, play End of Days when you can't stop it. Tread lightly.

Finally, keep an eye on the Kraken. Both the Maw and Limbs can be situationally useful, sometimes dealing 6 damage per turn to the villain and 5 per turn to the minions, but make sure you're keeping track of when you're about to become the highest or lowest HP target. The Kraken is equally happy to eat you.

Wagner Mars Base

General Strategy: Wagner Mars Base places the heroes inside Domes, secure spaces where the heroes can safely fight the villains, often providing helpful effects in the process. However, the weather on Mars is weird, and sometimes, Domes get destroyed. Wagner Mars Base is an Environment where Heroes who can view coming Environment cards will thrive, because a Red Dust Storm or Meteor Strike can be a serious disruption to progress. In addition to destroying your precious Domes, they also ruin your Items or destroy your Ongoing.

Decompression Protocol is a card that presents a significant risk to the Heroes if approached incorrectly. Being immune to damage can be a huge sigh of relief, but it's dangerous. Difficult villains like Voss will use this free time to spiral out of control, often to a point where the Heroes can't keep pace, and if you don't have Ongoing destruction handy, skipping half of your turn may cause even more issues. Similarly, Self Destruct Sequence adds an extra loss condition to the game, and requires active attention and resources to prevent that condition from coming true, so when you're in the Wagner Mars Base, make sure to reserve some cards to deal with the threats.

CORE GAME COMPLETE

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Rook City Renegades

Expatriette

General Strategy: Get your guns out. Load them. Fire. Repeat. Expatriette is a relatively low complexity Hero, but she does have some tricks to her that make her shine. She is incredibly consistent, carrying a plethora of cards that keep the team running like a well oiled machine, and an extremely respectable damage output to boot.

To start, let's talk a little about Expatriette's weapons. Each of her four Guns serves a different purpose, and having a variety of them in play will give you the versatility to handle any scenario that comes your way. Against villains like the Matriarch or the Organization, Modified SMG and Assault Rifle are invaluable for spreading out damage and mowing down a sea of targets. They also can be used to draw more cards, setting you up for future success. Against Akash' Bhuta or Apex, you may find more success using the versatility of Pride and Prejudice or sheer damage of Double-Barrel Shotgun to effectively punch through beefy targets. However, depending on your situation, you may often be able to get all four in play at once, giving you a berth of options. Fists Full of Lead ties the whole thing together by letting you use two powers per turn, allowing you to either fire two weapons or draw more cards to fuel the engine. Unfortunately, Expatriette has no way to fish for an Ongoing specifically, so you'll need to draw it by chance.

An added layer of versatility comes from your Ammo. The **Loaded** text on your Ammo cards can be activated for a single use by your Gun cards, allowing you to augment your Gun in a variety of ways. Hollow Point Rounds, Thermite Rounds, and Liquid Nitrogen Rounds increase your damage outright, and Shock Rounds simply lowers the threshold needed for a lethal blow. For the most part, Modified SMG and Assault Rifle use the Ammo in a simple way, making it easier to take out targets. The other two Guns let you get a little more creative, combining your Ammo cards for some really fancy plays.

The most straightforward is the Double-Barrel Shotgun, which can use two Ammo in one shot, allowing you to do things like blend Thermite and Hollow Point Rounds for 7 irreducible damage to a single target, or take out a 9 HP target by combining Hollow Point and Shock Rounds. With Pride and Prejudice, you get two separate shots, each of which can optionally be augmented with a different Ammo. You can use this to tackle two problems at once, or shoot the same target twice. For an example of how this can be used, you can load the first half with Hollow Point Rounds, dealing four damage to Spite, while using the second shot with Liquid Nitrogen Rounds to bury a Bystander, taking them out of the line of fire. With no external damage boosts, using Pride and Prejudice on a single target has identical effects to using the Double Barrel Shotgun. However, if your allies can boost your output, Pride and Prejudice being two separate

shots allows you to double-dip in any +1 damage dealt, in addition to the aforementioned option to split your shots to deal with two targets at once.

Finally, let's talk about what else Expatriette brings to the table besides gunfire. The deck has been filled with two types of One-Shot cards aside from Items. She has a series of cards like Arsenal Access, Lock and Load, and Black Market Contact that help her get her Items in play. She can also use the draw from her aforementioned Guns or the Reaction on Hairtrigger Reflexes in conjunction with her base power to get her Items out faster. Her second type of card are her two "Plan" cards, Backup and Comprehensive Plan. These cards allow you to dole out support effects to yourself and your allies, and are incredibly powerful. The only caveat is that the wording prevents you from choosing the same Hero twice, so you have to be judicious about who can best use each effect. Comprehensive Plan is generally more powerful, but Backup Plan gives you an extra discover, and its effects are designed to work you out of tight corners and recover from a nasty villain card, which can be a lifesaver in the right moment.

Overall, Expatriette excels in keeping distracting smaller targets under control and providing suppressive fire so that the rest of the team can set up. Once you're set up yourself, you can focus your attention on supporting your allies on your Play Phase and spend your Power Phase making all of your problems vanish. Then, point all of your guns at the big bad and blow them away.

First Appearance Variant

FA Expatriette sacrifices the control and early damage of her base power Quick Draw for an innate that lets her discover an Item, getting extra draw if it happens to be an Ammo. This makes your gameplay a little more improvised, as Expatriette usually doesn't draw a ton of cards. The extra draw may allow you to use your One-Shots a little more frequently, and help you find Fists Full of Lead. Otherwise, not too much changes, you're still focused on shooting things.

Dark Watch Expatriette

Dark Watch Expatriette has access to an incredibly rare ability in her innate power--fixed damage, something usually reserved for self-damage. Now, in most cases, fixed damage is worse than irreducible damage since it can't be boosted, but as long as you have spare Ammo on hand, there's something to be said for a guaranteed 5 damage shot that can't be redirected, reduced, or have its type changed. You won't be using it every turn, but it's incredibly handy when you need it, so keep a spare Ammo around in case some hapless little minion thinks they can hide from your sights.

Eclipse

Expatriette's secret identity is the variant that changes her gameplay most drastically, being the only one that doesn't take advantage of either of her Item types. In fact, it tells you to throw them away. As a result, you'll be playing around your One-Shots, and finding most of your firepower through alternate means such as Black Market Contact (which allows you to retrieve the Items you trashed) and Arsenal Access. You'll also most likely be playing your two "plan"

cards much more frequently, making you a more active support at the cost of early game potential. You'll also get more frequent access to Targeted Explosion, which can help clear out nasty non-hero cards and clear the way for others to work.

Setback

General Strategy: Setback is clumsy and unlucky, but beneath that, he's the heart and soul of the team, and his deck reflects that. Setback's deck is centered around the interplay between his Unlucky Ongoing and Lucky One-Shots, and the trick is to build up your bad fortune enough, and then cash in at the right moment for maximum effect. He has an array of powerful damaging and support effects which can be used to bolster his allies. His Lucky cards are incredibly powerful, but they require Unlucky cards to work at maximum capacity, which interfere with the team's ability to function properly. Therefore, to play Setback, you'll need to be aware constantly of where your teammates stand, and to keep them out of the crossfire as much as possible.

First, let's discuss the Unlucky Cards. Each of the Unlucky cards has a powerful effect on play, and a negative consequence afterwards. Setback is excellent at punching the villain, and drawing fire in return, taking heat off of his allies. Use your Unluckies carefully, and you'll be just fine. Be too reckless, and you may find yourself biting off more than you can chew. Dangerous Distraction in particular can be a massive threat if played randomly, as it mandatorily redirects all damage dealt to a chosen ally to Setback. High Risk Behavior and Reckless Rush will steadily eat away at Setback's health, so those should be spent as quickly as possible as well. Wrong Time and Place can be catastrophic against the wrong villain, bringing out one of Voss's Devices or Gloomweaver's Relics at the worst possible moment. Accidental Immolation and Careless Curiosity are usually manageable, with the caveat that Accidental Immolation can be incredibly threatening to Captain Cosmic or Unity. You also want to avoid it when Spite or Pike Industrial are involved, as these decks have constant targets that you don't want damaged.

In addition to this array of Unlucky Ongoing, Setback's deck also contains seven unique Lucky One-Shots. These cards are extremely potent, but require a bit of care to use to their full potential. Firstly, Setback's Lucky cards can be played at the wrong time. Looking Up can be played when Setback is nearly at full health, and Chain Reaction destroys an Environment card, whether you want it to or not. More broadly, they can also be played when you don't have enough Unlucky cards to fuel them. As such, you have two options to mitigate this risk. Your first option is to try to get enough Unlucky cards out that you're prepared for a Lucky at any time. This has the obvious drawback of forcing you to contend with the effects of the Unlucky cards in play, which can be unpleasant. Your second option is to find ways to engineer the optimal scenario. Deck scouting can help Setback know when his Lucky cards are coming, and draw support can get them into his hand safely where he can play them of his own volition. Take note that Setback has no way to reach into his trash, so once a Lucky card is spent, you're very unlikely to see it again in the same game. If played carefully, Setback can swing himself from the brink of death back to nearly full health, and wipe the field clean in the blink of an eye.

Rounding out Setback's deck are a couple of important cards which help keep him chugging along. Silver Lining is a powerful defensive tool, in addition to providing a reliable power for tight situations where you can't risk using your base power. If you're worried about accidentally hitting a target that may be able to retaliate or dealing yourself damage, Silver Lining may be your friend. Push Your Luck can provide you with a massive burst of speed, which is useful as a desperation play to gamble your way out of a tense situation. Finally, Cause and Effect can discover a Lucky card on demand, making it a powerful and reliable tool.

Overall, the strategy of Setback is about accepting and measuring risk. Play too fast and loose, and you'll take your entire team down with you. Play too conservatively, and you'll likely feel like you're not pulling your weight. You don't have a whole lot of control over what cards come out of your deck, but you do have a fair amount of control over the rate at which they're played. Additionally, because Setback doesn't cycle his deck often, you'll have an idea which cards are still in your deck as the game goes on, which can help you plan for future Lucky plays. Setback is all about intuition, knowing when to slow down, and when it's safe to hit the gas.

First Appearance

FA Setback is slower than the base card, but more predictable. You take more damage from the Villain, and you may struggle to get as many Unlucky cards in play, but you can get all of your important One-Shots safely to your hand, giving you more control. You may have to rely on cards like One-Armed Bandit and Push Your Luck to get enough Unlucky cards out, but don't discount the value of having a Jackpot or Looking Up exactly when you want it. Note that the damage from the power is not fixed, so it may be dangerous against enemies like Plague Rat who can innately boost their damage.

Dark Watch Setback




As the name Mitigate implies, Dark Watch Setback plays a much more controlled, methodical game. You can destroy an Unlucky card in play and then potentially replace it with a less harmful Unlucky card, allowing you to play the Unlucky on your Play Phase as a pseudo One-Shot, suffering none of the repercussions. Alternatively, you can draw a card or play one of your One-Shots to capitalize on your careful work. Similar to FA Setback, you'll have a harder time building a tableau of Unlucky Cards to take full advantage of your Lucky cards, but you can always choose to use Mitigate to play a card like Push Your Luck, and cycling Unlucky cards combos really nicely with Silver Lining for a bit of extra durability.





Fey-Cursed Setback

Choosing the lesser of two evils is the name of the game here. You can't stop the bad things from happening, but Double Down is an excellent power for pushing the game in the direction you want it to go. You get to play two extra Unlucky cards, getting the on-play effect of both (and healing from Silver Lining), then you destroy whichever one is worse for you. It's a very flexible power that offers less risk than base Setback. The downside is that you're going to have to find your Lucky cards yourself, but you can keep the tidal wave of bad luck at bay until you do.

Nightmist

General Strategy: Nightmist is a cursed mage, using a wide variety of Spell cards like a magical Swiss army knife, and as such, her role can be hard to put in a box. At her peak, her precision and control is unmatched, allowing her to manipulate play areas, support and defend her allies, and interfere with the villains' plans, all while outputting a very respectable amount of damage for a character that seems so utility-focused at first glance.

However, magic is difficult, and using a Spell without proper preparation can have adverse effects on Nightmist's health. Nightmist's magic can be unpredictable, represented by each of her cards having a Spell Number from 1-4. Most of her card effects scale with this number, checking the Spell number currently on top of your trash, represented by the following symbol: . In addition, most of her Spells begin with you discarding the top card of your deck, meaning that you won't have control over the power of her Spells. For example, one of her cards, Essence Transfer, allows you to deal  irreducible infernal damage and heal another target for an equal amount. This may have a huge effect, dealing 4 and healing 4, or it may be 1 damage and 1 HP recovered, which is very low value. She also often deals herself damage equal to , and given that her HP is middling, 4 damage per Spell can be extremely harmful, especially if you're playing multiple Spell cards in a turn. To avoid hurting yourself excessively and wasting high-numbered cards at the wrong time, it's often worth it to use your base power early on to draw rather than play, hunting for your setup cards.

So what else is in Nightmist's deck aside from Spells? As it turns out, the last quarter of the deck is the key to really making Nightmist shine. Master of Magic allows you to control  by discarding cards from hand immediately after a card forces you to discard, and refills your hand, allowing you to play more aggressively. Amulet of the Elder Gods boosts  by 1, increasing your minimum output to 2 and your maximum to 5. More importantly, it allows you to redirect any infernal damage dealt to you, as long as you can bury a card from hand to pay for it. This protects you from your self-damage, in addition to giving you a shield against any villains that deal infernal damage, like Spite or Apex, which can lead to a massive amount of passive damage redirected to the villain. Both of these cards offer precision and staying power, but they drain your hand immensely, which is where her other cards come in. Tome of Elder Magic is useful for the extra draw and to access Spell cards more cheaply and precisely than with your base power. Phial of Exomna provides healing and draw equal to , and can be destroyed for acceleration. Note that Phial does not require you discard the top card of your deck, meaning that you can play it early and ignore it until  is a suitably high number, then use the power to destroy it for maximum benefit.

With all that out of the way, let's talk about what Nightmist can do with her Spells. Even with no setup, Nightmist's base power means that she is able to play 2 Spells every turn. With her setup, she can precisely control her power to devastating effect. Oblivion can do up to 10 damage to every non-hero target on the field, as long as your allies don't mind taking a little backlash. Droplet of Lethe can destroy up to 5 Ongoing cards. Starshield Invocation and



Mistform both allow for a powerful defensive wall, which can work in conjunction with Essence Transfer to keep your allies in peak condition. If you get your own setup done early, Call Forth and Coalescing Spirit can help your allies get going. Tendril of Talontus can be combined with Master of Magic to play an extra card of your choice. Even her most situational card, Planar Banishment, can be used to stall any flip or win conditions that care about the villain trash, such as Blade or Dawn. Astral Premonition provides control and acceleration. Isolating Mists can be used to control a villain, often bringing a team back from the brink of death.

Overall, the strategy I've found to work best with Nightmist is to be in the moment. Especially once you're set up, you'll be churning through your deck at a high rate and any cards that you don't play will most likely be buried or discarded. This means that it can be difficult to plan ahead, and that what Spell numbers you have in hand may sometimes be more important than what the cards actually do. In short, the easiest way to play Nightmist is to assess the board state at the start of your turn, decide which Spells will improve the current situation the most, and play those. At the end of your turn, Tome of Elder Magic and Master of Magic will refill your hand with a new suite of Spells, making Nightmist one of the best improvisers in the game.

First Appearance Variant

FA Nightmist is simpler than base, but provides early damage, something base Nightmist is less consistent with. Her strategy doesn't change too much, but with Master of Magic, this can serve as a clean 4-5 damage on tap, which can be further boosted by allies. This can be useful against villains who Summon targets on setup to gain a better foothold at the start of the game. However, you play less Spells, so your utility may suffer quite a bit.

Dark Watch Nightmist

Dark Watch Nightmist is a powerful variant that gives Nightmist a cheaper way to get cards into play by pulling from the bottom of her deck, and the option to draw or discard the card if it doesn't suit her needs (or if changing  becomes important.) Additionally, where FA Nightmist emphasizes Master of Magic, Dark Watch places heavy focus on her Amulet. Since Amulet allows you to bury a card from hand, you can bury a card during your Play Phase, and then either play it during your Power Phase, or use it to alter , creating powerful Starshield Invocations or lowering the amount of damage you deal to yourself with Isolating Mists if you don't plan on redirecting.

Mentor Nightmist

Mentor Nightmist is the only Nightmist variant that doesn't interact with her cards at all, and as such, plays a little differently. The most obvious synergy is with Alpha, serving as a buffer for the damage she deals to her allies while boosting damage to the villain. However, there are a fair few instances where a villain or environment may force a hero to deal non-fixed damage to themselves or their allies. Especially if Ra has a couple Solar Flares out, this can sometimes mean the difference between life and death for an ally. Otherwise, even if no self-damage is being dealt, a +1 to all of the damage an ally deals can make a big difference.

Mr. Fixer

General Strategy: Mr. Fixer is many things. A blind old man. A retired vigilante. A mechanic. A master martial artist. A teacher. Fixer fights crime with nothing more than a lifetime of fighting experience and whatever tools he can find lying around, which is shown through his deck in a few key ways. First, he is built around his Tool and Style cards, with each one shaking up how he fights. Second, he doesn't have any powers in his deck, relying on his base power - punching someone for 2 damage, and then collecting one of his tools. While this may initially make it seem like he's unable to adapt to different situations or that he has little variation in his gameplay, ol' Slim is anything but inflexible. His Tool and Style cards modify the behavior of his base power, allowing him to adapt to any situation.

The first half of the puzzle is Fixer's Tool cards. Each card has a static effect that modifies either how his damage is dealt or adds an additional effect to that damage. They also have a one-time effect on play, which encourages you to switch Tools out frequently, especially since he can only have one Tool in play at a time. Dual Crowbars is the most universally useful option, providing a damage boost and defense, which are almost always beneficial. His other three tools allow for a little more specialization. Tire Iron lowers the damage threshold needed to destroy a target, with Fixer striking a lethal blow anytime he can get a target to 3HP. This will allow you to destroy a 6HP target in a single blow, and take care of higher HP targets faster than anyone else can. Jack Handle serves as effective crowd control, changing any text that says "Mr. Fixer deals 1 target" to "Mr. Fixer deals up to 5 targets." In conjunction with damage buffs, Jack Handle makes cards like Charge devastatingly effective, dealing a crowd of targets 4+ damage each in a single action. Finally, we have Hoist Chain, which changes Fixer from an offensive player to a capable debuffer. It doesn't deal any damage on play, but it allows you to reduce the damage a target deals each time you hit them. This can allow you to completely neutralize a single target, or spread out and weaken multiple targets at once. Also note that the Tools are not Limited, which means you can do things like swapping a Hoist Chain for a new Hoist Chain to draw more cards or destroy more Ongoing.

The other important set of cards for Fixer are his Styles, a set of powerful Ongoing that all provide a static effect and a Reaction, though like his Tools, you can only have one in play at a time. Alternating Tiger Claw is the simplest of the styles - it makes Fixer's damage irreducible, and lets him deal a target 2 damage as a reaction. While there is little to say overall about it, Fixer's main focus is damage, and this style provides a reliable source, in addition to allowing him to hit heavily defended targets while ignoring their damage reduction, making it a simple workhorse card. Driving Mantis lets Fixer draw 2 cards after using a power, and lets him use a power as a reaction (which of course, then lets him draw 2 cards). This is helpful to replenish your hand, or set up for our next Style, Riveting Crane. As a static effect, Riveting Crane lets Fixer deal 1 target 1 melee damage whenever he discards, and lets him discard up to 3 cards as a Reaction. Riveting Crane also makes Fixer one of the heroes who suffers the least from discard effects - a card or two going to the trash is a small price to pay to come out of the gates swinging, especially on someone else's turn, and you can usually switch back into Driving Mantis if your hand gets too thin. Lastly, we have Grease Monkey Fist - with a static effect of dealing a target 1 melee damage when one of your cards is destroyed, and a Reaction to

discover an Item, this card lets Fixer lean into his deck's flow, constantly switching out Tools, which is fantastic when you're in a busy fight with a lot of threats to juggle at once. Blow up an Ongoing on the Environment turn, and then switch back into crowd control for the Villain turn.

With his core cards out of the way, we can discuss Fixer's supplementary cards, which allow you to take advantage of your tools and styles in creative ways. Fixer can play in a stagnant style, keeping the same Tool or Style for most of the game, or he can play in a flowing way, changing his loadout to meet the current board state. Full Throttle and the Manifold Path allow you to play into a more versatile style, and to quickly recover if your setup is cleared. Your most important card outside of Tools or Styles is Harmony, which gives you a damage boost for having a Tool and Style in play, in addition to giving you a free swap of either on your Start Phase. Toolbox makes sure you always have Tools or Styles ready to go. Overdrive and Bloody Knuckles are a deadly pairing, with Overdrive allowing you to use your base power up to three times in a single turn, and Bloody Knuckles boosting the damage you deal by 2. If you're going to use Bloody Knuckles, make sure you have a plan, as it also increases the damage you take for a full round, leaving Fixer extremely vulnerable.

Finally, we'll finish off by discussing a few of Fixer's combos. Riveting Crane has excellent potential, allowing for three instances of damage. This means that any effect applied to Fixer's damage becomes extremely repeatable, whether that's using Hoist Chain to bring a target down to -3 damage dealt, or simply taking advantage of a damage buff. With Bloody Knuckles and Harmony in play, you'll respond to a hit by dealing three instances of 4 damage back, which you can either boost further with Dual Crowbars, or decimate an army using Jack Handle. You can also stack effects using Full Throttle, since it deals 2 instances of damage on its own, and more if you choose to swap out existing Tools while Grease Monkey Fist is in play. You have access to limited support through Life Worth Living, and if you ever run out of Tools and Styles, Zen Maintenance will get you back in action.

All things said, Mr. Fixer is a deck that is simple and elegant. While he doesn't really do much other than punch villains, he is the best at punching people, and his consistent damage output combined with his ability to adapt to just about any situation going on in the field means ol' Slim is able to take on just about any foe in the game and thrive in the process.

First Appearance

FA Fixer represents his time as Sifu Walker, focusing on him as a teacher. His base power only deals 1 damage, but it also lets an ally draw 2 cards. FA Fixer doesn't hit as hard, but he makes up for it by helping his teammates stay on top of their game. If you want to enter the fray yourself, your damage boosting cards become more important to keeping your output high.

Dark Watch Mr. Fixer

Slim Walker died, and was at peace. Then, he was brought back to "life" as a ghost possessing his own zombie. He is not thrilled with the situation. Dark Watch Fixer deals 3 damage with his base power, but at a cost - whenever he uses his base power, he either has to discard a card, or destroy a Hero Ongoing or Item. While this may seem like a steep cost, Fixer has ways to

benefit from it - he has good card draw and likes switching out his tools and styles as is, and he has styles that reward discarding or destruction with more damage; He can also help out certain heroes such as his Dark Watch teammates Harpy and Setback by destroying Ongoing cards of theirs that will either self-destruct on their turn or cause problems in their Start Phase. Additionally, you have a small hidden combo at your disposal. Overdrive and Bloody Knuckles become incredibly powerful, as you can deal 15 damage over the course of three uses of Bitter Strike, and then destroy Bloody Knuckles yourself before it becomes an issue.

Black Fist

Before he was Mr. Fixer, Harry Walker was the vigilante Black Fist. As Black Fist, you still deal 2 damage with your base power, but before you deal damage, you may summon one of your Styles - because Black Fist *always* has style. While Black Fist may not have as much health as base Fixer, the ability to summon instead of collecting helps give him a bit of reliability and acceleration that can really help him out. If you summon Driving Mantis, Fixer will draw 2 cards after the power is resolved, giving you a free boost if your hand is low.

The Harpy

General Strategy The Harpy is the apprentice of Nightmist, and a very powerful mage who straddles the line between delicate control and overwhelming avian power. This is displayed in her deck by constant access to dangerous and powerful Flock cards, which will do massive damage, but harm you and make it difficult to pull yourself back. Alternatively, she has a series of Ongoing cards and magic-themed One-Shots which will allow you to play more conservatively. Harpy is one of the most complicated heroes in the game, stemming from the number of cards you'll have in play, the number of decisions per turn you'll have to make, and the judgment needed to gauge when it's time to let loose.

The most important thing for Harpy is drawing cards. Almost all of her cards interact with her hand, whether by allowing you massive card draw, or in the case of the Flocks, stripping your hand away. Your base power deals some damage and then either draws you two cards or destroys a flock. This spells out every part of this character simply. You can draw more cards for more options or feeding to your birds, or reign in your control. Almost every card in her deck has this dichotomy built in, most clearly Eldritch Training, which gives you the same set of options every End Phase. However, overexerting yourself by drawing runs the risk of you drawing her Suddenly! card Losing Focus, which will damage you and force you to discover a Flock, something that you'll have to pull yourself back from.

If you want to play into Harpy's magical side, Lash of the Elements and Arcane Explosion deal damage, and accelerate you if you don't have any Flocks in play. Eldritch Training and Magical Bequest will help you play Flocks safely and destroy them before they become an issue. The trick to this side of Harpy is not to avoid Flocks altogether, but to take measured risks and have a plan to pull them back. Your two Cohorts, Huginn the Wise and Muninn the Scarred will help immensely with this. Huginn will accelerate your rate of playing and drawing cards, and provide a source of passive healing to whoever needs it. Muninn is more destructive, allowing you to

blow up Flocks and dealing decent damage without the cost of the Flocks. With both in play, you have the option to play a Flock using Huginn on the End Phase and then use Muninn next turn to destroy it before the cost comes around. Additionally, Harpy Hex and The Flock's Care will allow you to gain advantage off of destroying your flocks with damage and healing.

As for letting loose with her Flocks, these cards will give her powerful effects on her End Phase. Hawks, Herons, and Starlings will deal various amounts of damage while Magpies give her some support by allowing her to hand out card draws. However, on your Start Phase, you must discard 2 cards for each Flock you have in play. Then, even if you afford the discard, if you have no cards left, you'll deal yourself damage and the Flock will self-destruct. The goal to play an effective Flock game is to measure your draw against the amount you'll need to discard every turn. Be careful cutting it close, as any unexpected discard from the Environment or Villain may leave you unable to pay, even if you had enough cards on your turn. If you think you can pay, the Mask of Sky and Shroud and Uncontrollable Flock will allow you to build a massive swarm in the blink of an eye, but you'll likely need to solicit support from other heroes or a way to destroy Ongoing to survive. The flipside of this is that if you have your Flocks out, Harpy is a fantastic buffer for Ongoing destruction, as she can sustain multiple destructions from the Villain and Environment decks without losing her structural cards, and use her Ongoing which interact with the Flocks to benefit from the destruction.

As far as a finisher, Magical Bequest is your nuclear option. When you're ready, play every Flock you can, let them deal their damage, then use the End Phase on Magical Bequest to destroy them all. If you have Harpy Hex in play, you'll deal 2 damage for every Flock you destroy. If you had every Flock out, this will deal 16 total damage, in addition to whatever damage the Flocks did while they were in play, something not many villains can withstand.

In summary, keep an eye on your resources, be aware that Losing Focus is always lurking, and take heavy advantage of the Cohorts and Ongoing to keep your engine humming. Harpy is complex, but a little bit of restraint and measured risk will go a long way.

First Appearance

FA Harpy gives you more damage, but in exchange trades away consistency and control. This is more dangerous for Harpy, since a Flock or Mask might come out exactly when you don't want it, but it'll get you up and running faster.

Dark Watch

Dark Watch Harpy gives you access to your Cohorts more consistently. At the cost of discarding a card, you summon one of them and may discover a Flock. As your Cohorts are quite strong, having more options to get them out after they're destroyed or early in the game can be a powerful option. You also can use the Cohorts as a damage sponge without worrying about defending or healing them, since you can summon them right back.

Blood Raven

Blood Raven Harpy has the lowest HP of her variants, but in exchange, allows her to deal a target 3 damage, more than both base and FA, and heals her for 2. In exchange, you must destroy a Hero Ongoing. This can be one of your Flocks, but it also increases synergy with Setback by destroying his Ongoing, you can work well with Bunker by destroying his already used Modes, or you can use Argent Adept's extra songs if he has any.

Alpha

General Strategy: As a werewolf, Alpha can get a little out of control sometimes. At her peak, she has a ridiculously high damage output, but she also tends to become an indiscriminate whirlwind of fangs and claws, and other heroes can easily be put in the crossfire. Temperance is the key to safely navigating Alpha's deck, and the deck does not make it easy for you.

Her base power and the majority of her cards contain the sentence "Discover 1 Aspect," and your Aspects give you extremely powerful effects, such as damage modifiers, deck scouting, consistent Ongoing destruction, and more. However, if she has three or more Aspects out, she starts involuntarily badgering the lowest target, which can get very painful if that target happens to be another hero, herself, or Constructs/Golems. Eyes for the Hunt and any ally damage boosts will make this worse, often pushing you to dealing 2-4 damage per Aspect. If Legacy is in the game, you may find yourself dealing 6 instances of 4 damage to the lowest HP, enough to severely cripple or incapacitate most heroes in the game. If you have a ton of villain/environment targets in play, go to town. If not, Silver Bindings will mitigate the damage you deal to low HP targets, in exchange for you hurting yourself more and drawing extra cards, speeding you towards your Suddenly card, Full Moon, which throws a wrench in your careful calculations.

With the risks out of the way, let's talk about the rewards. As mentioned before, as long as you have a plan to deal with the backlash of the Aspects, Alpha is a damage machine. She has powerful One-Shots that scale with the number of Aspects in play. She's also extremely durable, with Powerful Frame providing an innate -1 damage taken and Thrill of the Chase allowing you to heal every time you deal melee damage, provided you didn't destroy the target. You can use Maintain Control or Quell the Beast to dip back towards your human side, provide some support, and then hit the gas back into wolf mode the next turn. However, once again, all of these benefits require careful management of where the Aspects are directing damage to, which may mean asking your allies to leave some villain targets alive for you to eat.

Depending on the setup of the game, you may have to temper yourself more than usual. As mentioned before, Alpha has to play very carefully around Captain Cosmic, Unity, and Harpy to avoid taking out their precious targets at the wrong moment. She can also become a liability in conditions where you don't want damage dealt, such as Spite's Bystanders or the Vats in Pike Industrial Complex. Lycanthropic Frenzy is a powerful card, but can hit the highest HP hero if

you're playing against low HP villains like Baron Blade or Censor, and will hit every target on the field if you have too many Aspects in play.

To summarize, the key to success with Alpha is a keen awareness of the board state, noting what you have available to eat, and if you'll need to pull back in order to spare your teammates some pain. You'll also need to keep an eye on your thinning deck and watch your draw rate to minimize the chance of an accidental Full Moon.

First Appearance

FA Alpha gains access to innate healing, at the cost of a few HP, but also becomes much more dangerous. She reveals the top card of her deck, drawing if it's anything other than an Aspect. If it's an Aspect, play it. This means that you'll usually have two draws per turn, since Aspects are relatively rare. However, this increases your chances of playing Aspects when you don't want them, or drawing Full Moon and wolfing out. This means you'll have to take calculated risks about when to use this and when to hold back, but you'll have access to a lot more of your deck than usual, which can loosen up your playstyle immensely.

Reporter Alpha

Similar to FA Alpha, Reporter Alpha risks a Full Moon at any moment, letting you draw two cards during your Power Phase. As a counterbalance, it lets you suppress your Aspects much more easily, burying them into the deck where they can be discovered again if needed. It also gives you access to some decent control over any deck you want, revealing the top two cards and manipulating the order. This can let you see dangerous villain cards, informing your future decisions, and can be used along with Lupine Senses to potentially see three villain cards per turn. In addition, after drawing the initial two cards, you can also use the scouting to see what's coming up next in your own deck and avoid any messes that could be caused by a dangerous card. This is a good Alpha variant to take in high pressure scenarios where eating the wrong thing could spell disaster.

Alpha 2000

Alpha 2000 is the only variant that doesn't accelerate or interact with her deck at all, instead relying on the Aspects you have in play to do its work. You'll have to work a little harder to get your table set up, since the power doesn't provide either a discover or extra draw, but once you have a few Aspects, it can allow you to reliably hit 4 or more targets at once, which is great if you have damage buffs and you're playing against a villain with tons of minions. The power is situational, and doesn't interact with Thrill of the Chase, but it also poses no risk to Alpha or her teammates, making it fairly reliable.

Villains

The Organization

General Strategy: The Organization is a very tough foe, quickly flooding the board with Thugs while the Chairman sits high above the conflict, immune to damage.

The first thing you'll notice is that there's an org-chart of sorts. The Chairman gives instructions to the Operative, who relays them to the Underbosses, who relay them to the Thugs. This means that a single action from the Chairman can have massive cascading consequences, but it also means that the chain is disruptable, and there are a couple places you can do this. The most obvious is to take out the Underbosses, which will need to be done to expose the Chairman's vulnerable flip side anyway. Alternatively, the Underbosses become fairly weak if there are no Thugs to give orders to, so if you can quickly remove the Thugs from play, that gives you breathing room to pick off the Underbosses at your leisure. Make sure to deal with the Fence early if you're going to take this avenue, as he's prone to burying the Villain trash, putting the Thugs back into circulation.

Alternatively, if you're feeling ambitious, you're able to break the chain higher up by incapacitating the Operative. Outside of the card New Assignments, the Chairman has no way of interacting with the Underbosses or Thugs directly on his front side, so taking out his right hand can grind the machine to a halt. The downside to this approach is that focusing too heavily on the Operative can allow the Organization to build a massive tableau with a large amount of DR, making it difficult to make any progress, especially if the Chairman flips over and starts activating Underboss Commands himself.

Looking at the Chairman's flip, it's wise to try to take care of multiple Underbosses quickly. He flips at your pace, so taking out multiple Underbosses in a turn minimizes the chances of one escaping through a Crooked Cop or Prison Break before he flips. It's usually favorable to defeat just enough Underbosses to flip the Chairman, and leave the others at a low HP. If you take out all of the Underbosses before the Chairman flips, he will return all of them to the field at full HP, which can be overwhelming.

If the stars align, you may actually be able to defeat the Chairman before the Operative, although this will not happen frequently. This slows down the Operative's side deck considerably, and prevents the massive activation of Commands on the End Phase, which can make the game much more manageable.

In general, teams who are able to dispatch multiple small targets quickly or block incoming damage will shine in this fight, as you will be facing multiple heavily protected targets at once. Irreducible damage is invaluable, as it allows you to ignore the passive effects of the Cops and Enforcers. The trick to beating the Organization is to stay ahead of the curve, as once you get behind, it's very difficult to catch back up.

Critical Event

The Bear is a much easier fight than the standard Organization, due to the fact that the Operative and Underbosses won't be bothering you. Whenever an Underboss would be played, it goes under the Bear and he damages you instead. The key to victory against the Bear will be to thin out the number of Thug cards he plays, as they will defend him and each other, in addition to doing bad things when triggered by the Environment. With them out of the way, the

Bear should go down relatively quickly, as he doesn't defend himself or heal. Any card that activates Commands can become a problem, as they have the potential to chain, and "Rook City Is Mine!" will activate any Thugs that care about Environment cards. If you can stop them from being played, all the better, but it's not absolutely necessary to win, and they shouldn't hurt you enough to distract you from the Bear.

Plague Rat

General Strategy: Plague Rat has a simple game plan. He's going to scratch you and bite you. Then, he's going to infect you. He deals massive amounts of damage, usually discovering one of his nasty Ongoing and placing it on you, representing an infection which will whittle down your HP and resources until you have nothing left. These two forces combined can make Plague Rat an overwhelming threat.

So how do you ice up the whole rat? The key to Plague Rat is to slow down his damage so that you can burn through 90 HP before he can take you down. The first point of strategy to discuss is Plague Locus. Plague Rat is primarily a single target villain, but he does have a single 9 HP Nest in his deck which buffs Plague Rat and any infected targets. It accelerates the rate of Ongoing discovery, but since it buffs the heroes, it's not bad in every situation. As such, one of the major decisions in a Plague Rat fight is "when do I destroy Plague Locus?" I find that since Plague Rat's damage output is so high, focusing fire on Plague Locus is a trap. If you have damage to spare, it may be worth chipping down Plague Locus so that it's easier to take out at a moment's notice, but fast, high-output heroes like Ra and Alpha may appreciate the buff as much as Plague Rat does. If your rate of damage isn't high enough to take advantage early, consider destroying Plague Locus to slow down Plague Rat. Once he flips, you'll almost definitely want the Locus gone, unless you have the defenses to weather Plague Rat at +3 damage.

Second, let's talk about infections. Plague Rat will attempt to play Ongoing in the Hero play areas, but as there are no mandates as to where the Ongoing go (other than that the target can't already be infected), it's up to you who gets infected with what, and this can be a critical decision. For example, Maddening Disorder's damage is not fixed, so giving it to Ra or Mister Fixer can be a death sentence for the other heroes. Heroes like Nightmist or Setback who take heavy self-damage can struggle with Wasting Sickness, and giving Fatal Disease to a hero who can heal themselves will take pressure off of allies who may not want to discard.

The rest of Plague Rat's deck is dedicated to infecting you and dealing damage. This means that deck control is not especially useful, particularly if it's at the expense of doing damage to Plague Rat. On the other hand, defensive cards can be extremely helpful, especially ones that block Plague Rat from doing damage altogether. Ongoing destruction is also crucial, as Plague Rat's method for destroying Ongoing on the reverse side of his character card takes a hefty toll. The more time you can keep Plague Rat on his front side, the less time he spends doing serious damage to you. Also of note, Plague Rat typically attacks hero characters, meaning that Captain Cosmic and Unity may not feel as much pressure to keep their minions out as usual. Plague Rat has very little disruption in general, with only one card that destroys Hero Ongoing,

and only one that destroys Items. He may inconvenience you, but he's pretty unlikely to set you back too far.

To summarize, the secret to Plague Rat is making sure your damage rate exceeds his by as much as possible. He has no defenses, only diversions, so you'll want to drill him down as fast as possible, or slow him down until you can get your damage rate up to par. Focus on making sure your infections are managed, and that he's not sneaking too much damage in.

Critical Event

Doctor Toxica is easier than Plague Rat in that she doesn't do nearly as much damage, but she trades that damage output for a tight timer. She adds tokens to the heroes at a pretty predictable rate, and once all heroes have 4 tokens, you lose on the spot. Additionally, the tokens debuff you as you go, making it harder to keep up your damage output. It's not uncommon for you to lose with Toxica having 10 or fewer HP, just because you couldn't squeeze out quite enough damage in time. You also don't have a way to remove tokens from heroes, which can be a problem for slower teams. However, there is a silver lining. Toxica adds tokens to the heroes with the fewest tokens, and this means that you often get the choice as to who gets debuffed first.

Heroes like the Harpy will care immensely when they have their damage reduced, as they largely rely on ping damage to be effective. Conversely, Tachyon, who draws a bunch of cards and can make her damage irreducible, doesn't really mind being at 3+ tokens. Neither does someone like Unity, who rarely deals damage herself, as Toxica can't debuff her Golems. Absolute Zero suffers immensely from the second token, but absolutely loves the first one that boosts the damage he takes. With this in mind, Toxica becomes a careful prioritization puzzle, seeing who can afford to take the debuffs first without sacrificing damage output, as you're operating on the razor's edge. Strategize to keep your damage output as high as possible for as long as you can, and Toxica should be a breeze.

Spite

General Strategy: Spite is just the worst. When you begin the game with him, he will mostly ignore you, instead hunting down innocent Bystanders. Now, as a hero, you should protect the Bystanders, because that's what heroes do. However, if for some reason, that's not enough incentive for your cold, unfeeling heart, letting the Bystanders die *also* makes your life much more difficult. Bystanders are beneficial when they're alive, and devastating to the heroes when they're destroyed, dealing large amounts of damage, accelerating Spite, or destroying Hero cards. In addition, Spite also gains a token for each Bystander he takes out, both accelerating his flip and fueling a trio of nasty Ongoing, Mind-Phyre, Chimaeric Mutagen, and Demon's Kiss. These three cards represent his drugs, and they serve to heal and defend Spite, in addition to dealing significant damage to the heroes. Spite's flip is inevitable, as you have no way to directly influence his tokens, so the incentive to protect the Bystanders is that his drugs all have a secondary effect when Spite has three or more tokens on his character card. Luckily,

you can redirect damage away from the Bystanders to yourself, but this comes with its own risks.

Aside from his drugs, Spite also has other cards which make the Bystanders much more of a liability. Bloody Summer is particularly brutal, punishing you for protecting Bystanders by doubling the redirected damage. At H=5, a single redirected blow from Bloody Summer's End Phase can deal 10-12 damage to a hero. Fortunately, your damage reduction applies before the doubling, meaning a good defense can keep the damage taken down, unless you're unlucky enough to be facing Relentless Stalker at the same time. His One-Shots, Too Many Potential Victims and "Can You Save Them?" flood the field with Bystanders, setting up for his reverse side End Phase and Chaos and Disorder to try to destroy them. He can also use Lost in the Crowd to hide behind his Bystanders, becoming immune to damage and attacking you from the shadows. You can, however, use this time to detox Spite and save a couple Bystanders in the process.

The trick to reducing Spite's effectiveness is saving Bystanders. Spite has a lot of attacks that hit every target, meaning that the damage you take is multiplied by the number of Bystanders in play. If Spite attacks every Bystander on his End Phase, and you have one Bystander out, you have 2 damage to account for. If you have six Bystanders out, that's 12 damage to redirect. Much worse. You can save Bystanders by taking advantage of Spite's cards which let you remove Bystanders from play, meaning that they've left the table permanently and can't be brought back. You can also use certain hero cards to Bury them, which stalls by putting them back in Spite's deck, out of the line of fire. If you can do this, Spite only has 65 HP, so he shouldn't be too much trouble. Just make sure you have a plan to deal with the Bystanders, and a plan to clear out his Ongoing. Stay safe out there, you never know where he's lurking!

Critical Event

Abomination Spite is gross. He's no longer hiding, and he's after the heroes. His Critical Event takes a lot of the complexity out of his deck, and replaces it with more bulk and a high damage output. Whenever Spite would play a Bystander, he consumes them immediately instead, and uses it to fuel his rampage. When you destroy an Ongoing, he destroys one of yours and heals. He also gets an extra 35 HP. However, he becomes a true single target villain, which means you can now attack him and the environment at the same time with spread attacks without worrying about hitting Bystanders.

So, let's talk about strategy. Since he's going to punish you for destroying his Ongoing, you have to be judicious about which ones are too nasty to stay around. Since he doesn't have a way to generate tokens on his character card, you may be able to leave his drugs around a little longer than usual. Bloody Summer and Lost in the Crowd become trivial. Most of the danger in the deck is shifted to his One-Shots, as they'll put more Bystanders under him, fueling his massive End Phase attack, where at maximum, he can deal up to 4 targets 7 damage each. If you have a way to filter out his One-Shots through deck control, or you can prevent Spite from dealing damage altogether, he becomes a pretty easy fight, but otherwise, you just have to be faster than him.

Gloomweaver

General Strategy: Gloomweaver is the feature villain of the expansion, bearing the highest difficulty rating. His danger comes from the unpredictability of his deck, with Gloomy being extremely prone to massive bursts of acceleration, flooding the field with Cultists and Zombies in the blink of an eye. His flip side is also *much* worse than the front, and it's impossible to flip him back, which creates a looming threat over the board.

Let's talk about Gloomweaver's alternate win condition first. When you first read it, you probably narrowed your eyes suspiciously. "Just take out a few Chosen? That doesn't seem so bad." You'd be right, most of the time. However, since only one card in his deck directly pulls out Chosen, you may be waiting a long time. In a 5-player game, you need all five Chosen taken out to win, meaning that if even one gets discarded by a player or the environment, you'll need to wait for the Villain trash to be reshuffled to win. In the meantime, Gloomweaver will keep whittling you down, forcing you to change your strategy to taking him down directly. Sometimes, it's just too late by that point.

The Chosen are also nasty when they're in play, with 4/5 Chosen potentially giving Gloomweaver an extra card in play. Xian Niu and Massey in particular can be brutal. Master Xian Niu gives an unconditional free card play to Gloomweaver, and Cult Leader Massey threatens to discover a Relic by picking off a Cultist at the wrong moment. Even Ronwe, who doesn't accelerate Gloomweaver, deals large amounts of damage and can cause massive amounts of gloom for minion-centric heroes. Considering all this, any sort of deck control can be helpful, as it allows you to scout for the Chosen you want, while avoiding the Relics you don't.

Speaking of which, Gloomweaver's Relics are another major threat, bearing a collective 90 HP and pulling out more enemies left and right. In addition, very few cards actively help find the Relics, which means that you might never see them, or you might see them all at once, making them harder to contend with. Gloomweaver is designed to be dangerous whether he flips or not, and he's in no particular rush to get to his back side. Gloomweaver's main threat is a death by a thousand small stings, where he has no cards that are overwhelmingly powerful on their own, but he distracts you with an alternate win condition and an unpredictable flip while his hordes of Cultists and Zombies chip away at your health. If he does manage to flip, you'd better be prepared for a race. He heals rapidly while dealing large amounts of damage, and there's no way to flip him back.

As far as strategy goes, Gloomweaver requires flexibility. If you get a lot of Chosen early, you'll likely have an easy game. If the Environment or a Hero happens to discard a few Chosen early on, the next best thing will be to drill down Gloomweaver and his Relics while you wait for his deck to reshuffle. He fortunately only has a single copy of Summoning Circle, but that card in particular has the potential to majorly screw up your game, as it simultaneously discards cards you want to find while thinning out the deck and playing Relics. Malevolent Malaise is also a strong accelerator that you may struggle to keep up with, and it tends to kick you while you're down. Having an early damage output and draw engine is important to beating Gloomweaver, as he makes it very difficult to recover if he gets ahead.

Critical Event

Soultaker Gloomweaver is one of the most unique fights in Sentinels. You'll be chasing Gloomweaver as he hops from target to target, trying to take them down before he moves on again. He imbues any target he enters with a natural defense, and as soon as he gets a whiff that they might be weakened, he jumps ship. Typically, he'll be jumping between his Chosen, as they have the highest HP in his deck, but if bulky environment targets come into play, Gloomweaver might choose to possess a T-Rex, take over a kraken, or hide inside a volcano, which can pose problems for the heroes.

The most obvious point of strategy with this Event is that you generally want to finish off a possessed target in a single round. If you don't finish the job, Gloomweaver will likely move onto another target in his Start Phase, meaning that your efforts are wasted. Irreducible damage focused on a single target is invaluable. However, Gloomweaver still plays a ton of minions, so make sure you don't completely neglect the other targets on the board, as focusing too much on Gloomweaver himself may create an overwhelming flood of targets that you can't deal with in time.

Additionally, if you can clear the board of high HP targets, Gloomweaver will be forced to enter low HP targets like his Cultists and Zombies, which can make your life much easier. Since nothing in Sentinels is simultaneous, you may be able to set up chains using multi-target damage where you take out one target, move the token to a new target, and destroy that one immediately as well. Just make sure you don't take too long, as any possessed targets you destroy fuel Gloomweaver's End Phase.

Finally, you may enter a situation where there are no targets on the board, and Gloomweaver is stuck in limbo waiting for a new target to enter play. You can use this brief period of time to set up, knowing that even if the environment causes the villain to deal damage somehow, it will fail, since Gloomweaver is not currently in play, and is not a target who can deal damage.

Kismet

General Strategy: Kismet is not a difficult fight, but she has a unique strategy that takes some getting used to. Rather than trying to overwhelm you with damage, Kismet wants to slow you down. Her Unlucky cards lessen the damage you deal, disincentivize you from playing and drawing cards, chip away at your setup, leaving you weak and vulnerable to her attacks. She very rarely stops you from doing anything outright, but she decreases the value of all of your cards, and makes you hesitant to counterattack. In addition, she has Lucky cards that further defend her, either by playing more Unlucky cards, or using cards like Shared Fate and Inconceivable Obstruction which counterattack and redirect damage away from Kismet.

The key to Kismet, like many other villains, is careful prioritization. You want to keep the number of Unlucky cards in play low, but she punishes you with fixed damage for every one you destroy, so it's usually beneficial to keep Ongoing destruction on hand for the really painful ones, rather than taking out every Unlucky you see. As an example, a hero with a large HP pool may not

care as much about Weak Heart early on, especially if they can negate or reduce incoming damage. In addition, you'll want to have some Ongoing destruction reserved for her Lucky Ongoing, as they can be a major obstacle to victory.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, it may be worth it to allow Kismet to flip rather than trying to weather her front side. She'll punish you every time she plays an Unlucky card, but she plays them at a much slower rate, and you can remove the problematic ones without retribution. Just don't let too many Unlucky cards build up in a single play area, as doing so can lead to a massive hit from Kismet's End Phase.

Next, we come to the Adhin Talisman. Get rid of it. For some other villains, their key card summoned during setup may be inconsequential or a distraction from the main target. Not Kismet. The Adhin Talisman is a very strong boon to Kismet, keeping her safe while turning Hot Streak and Fortune's Smile into devastating blows, especially in conjunction with any Glass Jaw cards in play. Unless you have a strong defense and consistent irreducible damage, the 7 damage required to dispatch the Talisman will save you a world of pain.

Finally, this guide doesn't typically cover nemesis interactions, but Setback is worth a special mention. None of Kismet's cards specify "Villain Unlucky/Lucky cards," which means you have to tread very lightly bringing Setback to this fight. Unlucky/Lucky cards you play or destroy will also benefit Kismet, as her cards react to Setback's cards as well. Setback accelerates her flip, provides fuel for her Talisman, and can swing the game in unpredictable ways. On the other hand, Setback can use Kismet's cards to fuel his own as well, meaning you can potentially pull off a full-strength Lucky play on your first turn.

Critical Event

Empowered Kismet is an event that scales heavily in difficulty with the Environment you choose, as she turns the Environment entirely into a boon for herself. Anytime the Environment attacks her, she negates it and plays more cards. She also plays more Environment cards, increasing the chances that she'll be attacked. She does much less damage directly, and cycles her Unlucky cards much faster due to her Lucky cards destroying Unlucky cards when played. The Unlucky cards are still inconvenient, but she doesn't use them as a damage reserve the same way standard Kismet does. She also hurts you if you have no Unlucky cards in your play area, so you're not quite as incentivized to destroy them.

The strategy for Empowered Kismet is to keep a lid on the Environment as much as possible, as that will be her primary source of damage and disruption. However, you still have to defeat Kismet herself, so it's important to strike a balance between controlling the Environment and beating her down, otherwise the game will drag on and you'll likely be worn down before you can chew through her 99 HP.

Ambuscade

General Strategy: Ambuscade has a flair for the dramatic, and that shows in his gameplay through and through. His deck is heavily centered around random chance, and he can go from light pressure to an overwhelming threat at the drop of a beret.

First, let's discuss Ambuscade's flip condition, as that will be your main enemy throughout the game. Ambuscade is going to start the game harassing the highest HP hero, dealing damage until he's able to flip. *And he will flip. Constantly.* He flips every time a One-Shot is played, or when one of his many Ongoing is destroyed. This means he's going to spend a large portion of the game immune to damage, usually mocking you from the shadows on the turn you have a big finisher like Haka of Battle or Lightspeed Barrage set up. He'll be sitting safely at 10 HP, shooting you from every angle while you scramble to find him.

However, there are a few things you can do to counteract this. The most obvious is deck scouting/control. If he can't play One-Shots, he'll be much less likely to flip. While he's invisible, you can sometimes rig a deck to bring a One-Shot to the top, making your life much easier. If you don't have access to these tools, you'll be working through a combination of predicting when One-Shots are likely to come up, playing his discard game on the reverse side to flip him back as quickly as possible, or working around his Ongoing, which also have a flip baked in. If you're able to destroy the Ongoing yourself, you can force a flip while also avoiding the nasty Start Phase effects. His One-Shots are the most frequent way of flipping him, but they'll also deal a ton of damage and disrupt your setup, so be careful and keep your guard up.

Aside from his flip, Ambuscade has a couple nasty tricks up his sleeve. He has three Devices in his deck, all of which serve a similar purpose, defense. Reactive Plating is generally the most threatening, reducing the amount of damage Ambuscade takes and hitting you with heavy backlash. Auto Stims and Hunter Drone are both annoying, healing/helping him flip and reducing a hero's damage respectively, but they're generally easier to dispose of, having lower HP and not reducing the damage output of the team.

Overall, Ambuscade is pretty straightforward, the trick is mostly to keep an active hand on his flip condition to the best of your ability, rushing him down when he is visible, and keeping some heavier damage in reserve so that you can quickly deal with his Devices when they come out. The tricky part is getting a sense of when you can expect him to flip, as that will generally inform whether you want to play your defensive cards or get ready to strike.

Critical Event

Vainglorious Ambuscade is pretty simple. He's a damage race. He's not here to kill you, he's just here to humiliate you. If he hits you 30 times, **Game Over**. This poses a problem for slow-starting teams or defensive teams, as reducing damage doesn't really do too much unless you can block it completely. There are a couple things you can do to slow him down, but with only 60 HP, it's usually best to rush him down.

Stalling Vainglorious Ambuscade can be a viable strategy, but it should be done with the intent of preparing for a quick rush. The longer the game drags, the more likely it is that he'll hit you. That being said, if you can use deck control tactics to keep his Ongoing or his Devices out of play, that'll make your life easier, as they often defend him, heal him, and cause him to deal extra damage. As usual, watch out for Reactive Plating, as that'll slow you down, as will the Hunter Drone.

Apex

General Strategy: Apex is the king of the pack, leading an army of dangerous werewolves to maul you to death. He only has 50 HP, but he heals like nobody's business. Combine that with an innate +1 damage dealt and the fact that Villain Werewolves have an innate -1 damage taken against any target with lower HP, and you have a board of 20+ HP targets that can be incredibly difficult to kill.

However, there is a weakness beneath all this. The Werewolves are more or less unified under their king, but they all want a shot at the throne, and Apex will do what he has to do to keep it. This means that Apex is not above attacking his own pack to keep them under control. Apex's obsession with being top dog is helpful to the heroes, who can allow Apex to slowly chip down these beefy underlings. In addition, you can leverage The Pack Hungers and Blood Magic's Boon to help wear down the Werewolves as well, as the Werewolves don't receive their -1 damage taken if they attack themselves.

The ideal strategy is to rush Apex quickly, but leaving too many of his cronies alive can spell certain doom for the heroes. Chel is incredibly dangerous, hurting every non-villain target on the board. Rowan attacks the lowest, which can spell trouble for heroes with minions or those who are close to incapacitation. Most other wolves will just beat on the highest HP, but they are incredibly good at doing so. Finally, Magistra Damaris will help you damage the Werewolves, but will heal every villain target every time a Werewolf is destroyed. Gumbo will usually attack Apex, so he may be worth leaving around occasionally. The other danger in leaving too many Werewolves around is that Apex will flip if he's not the highest HP Werewolf, giving another Werewolf his damage buff and healing himself along the way.

So what are your priorities? Any sort of control over what cards are coming up in Apex's deck can be extremely helpful, since most of his deck is dedicated to pulling out more Werewolves, and Apex's healing scales with the number of wolves in play. If you can prevent him from getting his Werewolves out, he's significantly less dangerous. You'll also want to prioritize large hits, as small chips will frequently be healed off or negated.

Finally, I'll mention a couple big threats to look out for. Moonless Night can offer a dangerous reprieve for Apex, increasing his defenses while allowing him to grow his pack. In conjunction with Blood Magic's Boon, the wolves can ignore the damage penalty while sitting comfortably behind a -2 shield. A Wolf Among Sheep can be incredibly dangerous if it can pick off a hero's minions, leading to Apex healing back most of his lost HP. Making of an Alpha can also be a vicious card, both because it can chain into other nasty cards and because it takes advantage of

a hero's damage buffs, meaning that a hero like Ra may be attacking their ally for 6+ damage towards the end of the game.

Overall, keeping Apex's play area under control and keeping Werewolves at manageable health is the key to victory here. Rushing Apex quickly is the optimal strategy, but make sure he doesn't build his offense up, or you may be in for a rough time.

Critical Event

Blood-Leashed Apex is an extremely threatening fight that brings Magistra Damaris to the forefront of the game. This Event changes Apex's usual flow into a brutal rush where an unsuspecting team can easily be dismantled. With proper strategy, this fight becomes much more manageable, but it should be stressed that this will not be easy.

The first layer of difficulty is that each Werewolf he plays will ruin your setup, and getting rid of those wolves will grant him more power. The ideal scenario is burying the wolves, but that won't always be possible. If you're unable to bury them, your best hope is usually to try to reduce the damage they deal to you, or finish off Apex before they can become a huge issue. Due to Apex's massive End Phase attack, any villain damage boosts can become a nightmare, and destroying too many Werewolves increases the chance of you running into The Pack Hungers. Deck control can be useful to prevent the wolves from entering play in the first place, but if that's not an option, you'll need to dispatch Apex before he builds his board too much, or have a ton of Ongoing destruction to clean up after the Werewolves are taken down.

Second, you have Magistra Damaris to contend with. She's essentially immortal, being re-summoned each Start Phase, so there's not too much point in getting rid of her unless you gain benefits from taking out targets. However, she forces Apex to play more cards, so she's not much good alive either. The trick here is to make sure she always has a low HP target to pick on besides the heroes. Usually, this is Environment targets. You can let her attack the Werewolves as well, but you run the risk of her taking one out, which will play more Ongoing and cause all of the villain targets to heal.

Irreducible damage and a fast, high damage team are great boons in this fight, and most of your fire should be focused on taking Apex down, rather than bothering too much with distractions.

The Fey-Court

General Strategy: The Fey-Court have two rulers, and two viable ways of taking those Rulers down. The first is to satisfy the Dagda's win condition by pleasing the Fey. The second is to beat both rulers into submission. Here, we'll cover both avenues, discussing the benefits and drawbacks of each, as well as the circumstances under which each becomes viable.

First, let's discuss a token victory. Your chances to please the Dagda and escape the court unscathed depend mostly on which minions are put into play. Generally, your way of generating favor tokens will be through the three Advisors. Lugh and Ogma are almost universally good to have in play. Ogma comes with no consequence, and Lugh has by far the quickest way to

generate tokens. Puck is a bit more situational. If you can rig situations (whether through Ogma or your own methods) where the Fey leaders will flip frequently, Puck will be able to generate tokens for you at a pretty reasonable rate. However, he also is prone to playing more villain cards if he doesn't see a flip, which can be troublesome. If you get a few Will O'Wisp Heralds and don't mind taking damage, you can also earn a few tokens this way. The strategy here is generally to leave just enough tokens on the Morrigan to prevent a surprise flip from losing you the game, and load the Dagda as fast as possible. Ogma is useful in this case, as he allows you to break your Bonds without consequence. The Bonds bury themselves upon activation, losing you a token, but if Ogma is in play, he will add a token back immediately, which you can use to either progress towards the Dagda's win or keep the Morrigan's pool at a safe level. Additionally, you want to be extremely cautious about watching their flips, as the Dagda's reverse side End Phase can deal 10+ damage to a single target if he flips right before you're about to win.

Next, we'll talk about beating the Court into submission. If you're going to take this route, the safest option is to wait until the Morrigan flips naturally, and then beat her from there, being careful to manage your tokens as you go. If you want to be more proactive and flip her yourself, make sure you have Ongoing destruction on hand to get rid of The Court's Displeasure, which will make beating down the Morrigan without draining her token pool extremely difficult. You'll have to work within your Bonds here, as many of them forbid you from dealing damage or destroying targets, and disobeying will only lose you more tokens. Be sure to put the Bonds on targets where they'll be unlikely to interfere. Giving A Taste of Power to Ra, for example, will make your life incredibly tough. If you're choosing the path of violence, you'll want to keep the Dagda's token pool low to avoid the wrath of his End Phase, but it may be worth putting a token on Dagda once in a while so you don't have to take them off of the Morrigan.

Either way you choose, a couple points of strategy remain the same. Advisors will almost always be helpful, Courtiers will generally harm you. The Salamander Arbiters and the Pixie Knights are almost universally detrimental. The Dryad Chancellors and Will O'Wisp Heralds can be mitigated through deck control or defense respectively, and will generate tokens if properly managed, but can often be more helpful for Lugh's token generation than they are left alive. The Nymph Stewards are the most oppressive of the bunch, as they restrict your actions whether or not you fulfill their conditions, and are usually a high priority to take down. In most games with the Fey, trying to flip back and forth between the two paths to victory will result in you being whittled down, so you'll generally want to pick a lane and commit to it unless a roadblock that you can't clear arises. Keep an eye on your token pools, watch which Bonds go where, and you shouldn't have too much trouble with the Fey.

Critical Event

War-Girded Dagda and Morrigan are a much more straightforward fight than the standard Fey Court. They're not interested in hearing your arguments or granting safe passage, they simply want you dead. With 120 HP, they can be a very formidable fight, but they don't have much in the way of defense. Unique to this fight, they do give you the option to take Bond cards of your own volition, which grant you both additional powers and limitations.

This fight recontextualizes the entire deck, and the advice given in the general section will not apply. Most of this is down to the fact that the rulers deal damage whenever a token would be added or removed. This makes the Advisors a massive liability, particularly Lugh, who will now punish you whenever you take out a villain target. You'll want to take precautions to avoid gaining or losing tokens, which means getting rid of any target which will feasibly add them. You may have to take on Bonds to keep pace with the damage, especially since the Fey-Court makes you discard cards. A Modicum of Knowledge and An Offer of Prosperity can be extremely helpful as long as you play around the Bonds' End Phases. Bonds like A Taste of Power are much more risky, as they are prone to being triggered on the Fey's End Phase, causing problems for the heroes.

Overall, this is a pretty simple fight, but it may require some reevaluation of which cards in the deck are threats and which ones are helpful compared to the standard fight, so take your time and think through what will help you towards victory. Keep your damage high, and it should be smooth sailing.

Terrorform

General Strategy: Terrorform is a massive target, and incredibly durable. To take it down, you'll have to get inside where you can do some real damage. To do that, you'll need to destroy its Access cards. These cards all have ways of putting tokens on them, and if you want to take it down before it destroys you, you'll want to pay attention to what they need.

Two of the Access cards require Heroes to use the power on them, so you'll want to have someone with spare power uses available (or someone willing to donate their normal power use). Two of them activate on the Villain End Phase, so you usually don't have to plan too much around them. Two of them revolve around dealing damage to either Terrorform or its minions. Keep in mind that these targets have DR, so you'll have to hit them with larger effects in order for the Access to get a token. The last Access revolves around skipping your Draw Phase, so whether or not it's a viable entry point depends on whether you can sustain a decent hand size. Keep in mind you only need to destroy 3 of these cards, so if you find it difficult/impossible to fulfill an Access card, don't panic! Terrorform plays at least 1 each turn, so you'll have plenty of choices, and it can sometimes be the right move to turtle down and wait for an easier one.

Terrorform's pace can oscillate between lethargic and extremely fast. Almost all of its cards are Minions, Devices (both of which have HP) and Access cards. However, it has two accelerants in its deck: its only One-Shot: "Send Everyone!" and Troop Egress Hatches. These two cards working in tandem can quickly flood the board with threats. Add that to the Environment deck play that the Terrorform does on its front side END PHASE, and you can quickly have a board teeming with targets bent on dealing damage to the Heroes. That being said, (aside from the Lower Cranial Aperture Laser) the targets that the Terrorform puts out are relatively low damage. Focus on taking them out one at a time and you'll do fine. If you have any damage reduction and/or redirection, your team will be relatively safe.

A few things of note when you're working on staying alive and clearing the board: Terrorform has no Ongoing. This means you can feel free to use all of your Ongoing destruction on any nasty Environment cards that come up. In addition, you'll also want to keep track of what targets are out on the board. A couple of Terrorform's Access cards care about targets you damage and targets that might be on the deck. Doing a bit of card counting and figuring out what's likely to be left will greatly improve your odds of fulfilling those Access cards.

Once you flip Terrorform's character card, it's time for a damage race. With the HP cut in half and the DR removed, Terrorform is still a relatively bulky but highly damageable target. It plays extra cards during its End Phase now, but you'll note that once you're inside the Terrorform, its Devices are less effective. Your setup is now secure and your board will take a bit less damage! Use that breathing room to punish the weird robot heart and secure victory!

Critical Event

Terrorform Mk III is a bit more of a damage race than standard Terrorform. You won't have to deal with the DR on the front side, but you also have to chew through its HP manually, in addition to dealing with its healing effect. Repeated small hits will frequently cause most of the healing to go to waste though, so AOE effects will do wonders against a field of Devices. One thing to note: Terrorform's devices are more effective when it has more than 100 HP, so it may be worthwhile to damage race it down to 100 HP, then calm down for a second and build up before you rush it down further. Once Terrorform gets to 50 HP, it'll start playing even more cards, so time your entry into that HP threshold well.

Environments

Rook City

General Strategy: Rook City is a nasty place. There are three Bystanders in the deck that are helpful. Every other card hurts. The trick to surviving in this place is to keep a constant hand on the reins. Most of the cards aren't immediately going to lose you the game, they will be a slow, constant drain on your health and hand size, until you have nothing left. All three Smear cards make you discard cards, Thugs will hurt you and take your stuff, and the rest of the cards are dedicated to keeping this engine rolling. Without some source of Ongoing destruction, you'll have a very tough time here, as the only source of Ongoing destruction in the deck is Tony Taurus, who makes you pay for it in discards. If you aren't able to get rid of the Smears, your best course of action is to focus as much fire as possible on the villain, using your resources while you still have them available to end the game before Rook City ends you. Also, pay special attention to Media Pressure's passive effect when fighting target heavy villains, because leaving it out against the Matriarch or Gloomweaver can be a death sentence. On the bright side, Despair and Decay and Street Gang can both be turned to your advantage against certain villains, taking out their targets so you don't have to, but be careful how long you leave them around. Safe travels, and don't go out at night! This city means business.

Pike Industrial Complex

General Strategy: Vats and Rats are the name of the game here. Pike Industrial Complex only has 8 unique cards in it, making it incredibly consistent in what it does. It's going to play Vats, Rats, and then it's going to use Chemical Explosion to destroy all the Vats and wreak havoc. Dealing with the Rats is generally easy, and they attack fairly indiscriminately, so it may be worth leaving them around in some cases to harass villain targets. Be careful with the Escaped Lab Rat, as those have a tendency to chew on Vats, which is bad for everyone. The Vats are the major threat here. They won't hurt you unless you touch them, but with two copies of Chemical Explosion looming, there will be a consistent pressure hanging over your head. Occasionally, it can be worth it to attack a Vat if it means taking out a target, healing yourself, or cycling out an Ongoing, but you'll generally want to take the Vat out in one blow if you choose to remove it. Finally, there is a single Clone to deal with, which will generally become a bother for either the lowest HP Hero or just keep attacking villain minions. Pike Industrial is best dealt with on a case-by-case basis, evaluating what is a threat in the moment and what can be left for later.

Diamond Manor

General Strategy: Diamond Manor can be a benign environment, or absolutely devastating, depending on what cards come into play. The core mechanic of this deck is squabbling with the villains over who gets to hold the shiny Relics. They're incredibly helpful if you can manage to work them in your favor, but a villain getting their hands on something like Balov's Clock can be a disaster. Relics can be tricky because very few cards in the game interact with them, meaning you'll generally have to interact with Diamond Manor directly to destroy or influence them at all. Cards like Tempest's Flash Flood Warning that destroy Environment cards are useful, but rare.

Generally, you have fairly little influence over where the Relics go, and they can just sit in the Environment play area for a while, so when the deck presents you an opportunity, you'll want to snap them up quickly. Your most consistent ways of getting the Relics in your play area are Kuranchu and the Relic Room. Brigit can also do it, but she's prone to handing Relics to the villains as well.

As far as specific Relics, you'll generally want to make a point of getting your hands on the Diamond Book of Monsters, Edifice of Respite, and Balov's Clock. These are generally very helpful to the heroes, and very painful if the villain gets them. Prison of the Inner Eye is one that is harmful to whoever holds it, and giving it to villains like Voss can absolutely wreak havoc on their giant armies. If the heroes get it, it can be a nightmare for any Constructs or Golems in the play area. Prison and Bloodless Reliquary can be tricky because they move around without outside influence, so it's often good to use Arcane Observatory to destroy them.

Overall, it can be very tempting to neglect Diamond Manor and focus on the villain, but once Relics find a way to move, they can cause a lot of problems and be hard to get rid of, so make sure you're at least keeping an eye on the Environment, even if you're not focused on actively pursuing the Relics.

The Temple of Zhu Long

General Strategy: The Temple of Zhu Long is best described as...dramatic? It's generally filled with minions that will damage and disrupt your play, but aside from that, it has Rituals that can majorly affect the course of the game, and Zhu Long himself, who can cause chaos in an instant.

First, let's discuss the Rituals. Pool of Revival is the flashiest, allowing you to revive an incapacitated hero at cost. With this one, timing is crucial. It only restores a hero to 8HP, and reviving them right before the villain turn can just lead to them being incapacitated again immediately, so it's often worthwhile to leave the hero incapacitated for a round while you use their incap abilities to help get the field under control. Mysterious Ceremonies is a massive accelerant for both the Environment and heroes, allowing you to build a hand or play area back pretty quickly. Temple Trials is inconsistent, but it can be powerful if you have some deck control to ensure that the Ritual progresses. Finally, Resurrection Rites can be absolutely game-changing. Against villains like the Chairman, you can lock away all of their minions in the Temple, preventing them from being discovered, summoned, or accessed by any means.

The minions in the deck are fairly straightforward, dealing damage to heroes and preventing them from counterattacking, but I want to give some special attention to the Shinobi Assassin. These ninjas can be a huge problem, harassing low HP targets, and then going to hero decks, where they'll disrupt your engine by eating your normal card draw and then going back into play. As such, there are a couple ways of dealing with them more permanently. The simplest (and longest term) is to bury them. More niche ways include finding a way to shuffle them into your deck using a discover or collect. A very niche way of dealing with them is to shove them under Bunker's Ordnances and using them as Ammo.

Finally, a quick note about Zhu Long. He pulls out Rituals, which can make your life more difficult. He can also turn into his True Form, which will deal a whipping 6 damage to the second highest HP target (usually a Hero). Very dangerous. Again, deck control can be very useful to keep him out of the field, especially since he has relatively high HP. Both Dragon Master cards are disruptive, and I find unless you're looking for a specific ritual, better to not be in play.

The Realm of Discord

General Strategy: The Realm of Discord can make you dizzy. It plays very few cards at a time, since all of the Distortions blow each other up. However, each Distortion is majorly disruptive to the game, and they sometimes change multiple times per round, so you have to keep your head on a swivel.

First, let's talk about the Denizens. The Explosive Bubbles are manageable, but the Portal Fiends and Oracle of Discord will both have major implications for the way you play. Portal Fiends will cycle out Distortions, meaning that you can't rely on having a specific Distortion available, and the card played on the Play Phase often will not make it to the end of the turn. The Fiends are also fairly bulky, meaning you may have to make a concerted effort to get rid of

them. The Oracle is even more impactful, offering a one-time opportunity to switch variants, healing back to max HP. On the other hand, it will also commonly discover extra Ongoing for the villain unless you have a minion maker around, and with 20 HP, it's no joke to get rid of.

As far as Distortions go, they can throw major wrenches in your plans. The most impactful are Buffeting Ephemeral Winds, which can majorly prevent you from getting the villain under control, and Claustrophobic Delusion, which can swing the game massively in the heroes' favor, especially if the villain has a big attack built up that you were trying to avoid. Pervasive Frailty can be a problem, but opens up a supercharged counterattack if you survive the villain turn. Time Flies will also speed the game along, as will Ghostly Images.

I don't often find it's worth your time to engage with the Distortions directly unless you have Ongoing destruction to spare, and generally prefer to go with the flow of the game unless one of the majorly impactful ones is preventing my progress.

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